

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

# VUEWEEKLY

2 / DECEMBER 13 - DECEMBER 20, 2006 | **FREE**  
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NEWS: DOWNTOWN EAST / 7

VISUAL ARTS: *SCIENCE = MAGIC* / 57

FILM: QUINCEAÑERA / 59

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## THE FRANKLINS

LOCAL ZOMBIE-PUNKS COME BACK FROM THE DEAD  
TO TAKE A BITE OUT OF CHRISTMAS  
[BRYAN BIRTLES / 65]

2007

NEW YEARS EVE  
PARTY GUIDE



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Photos by  
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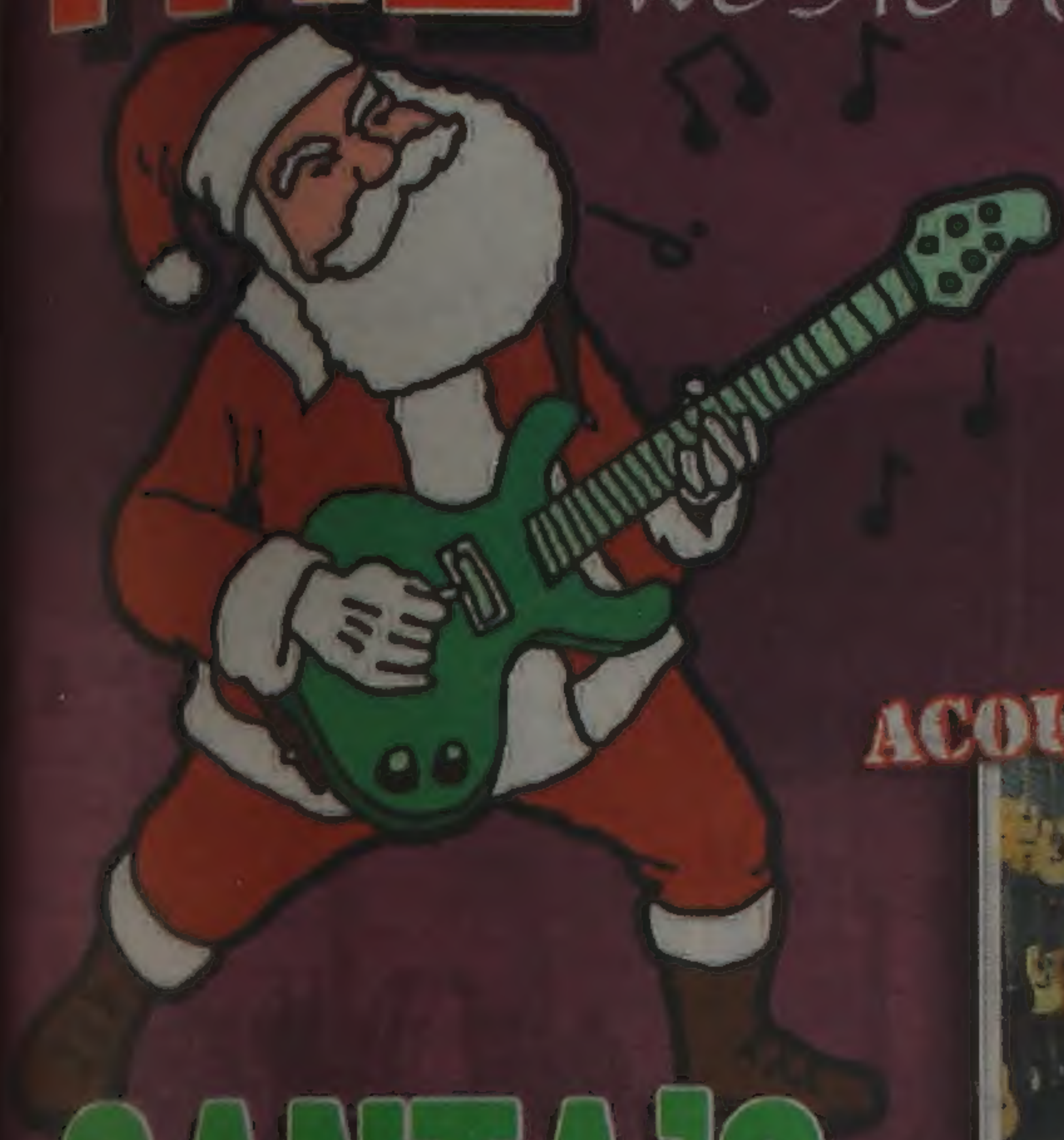
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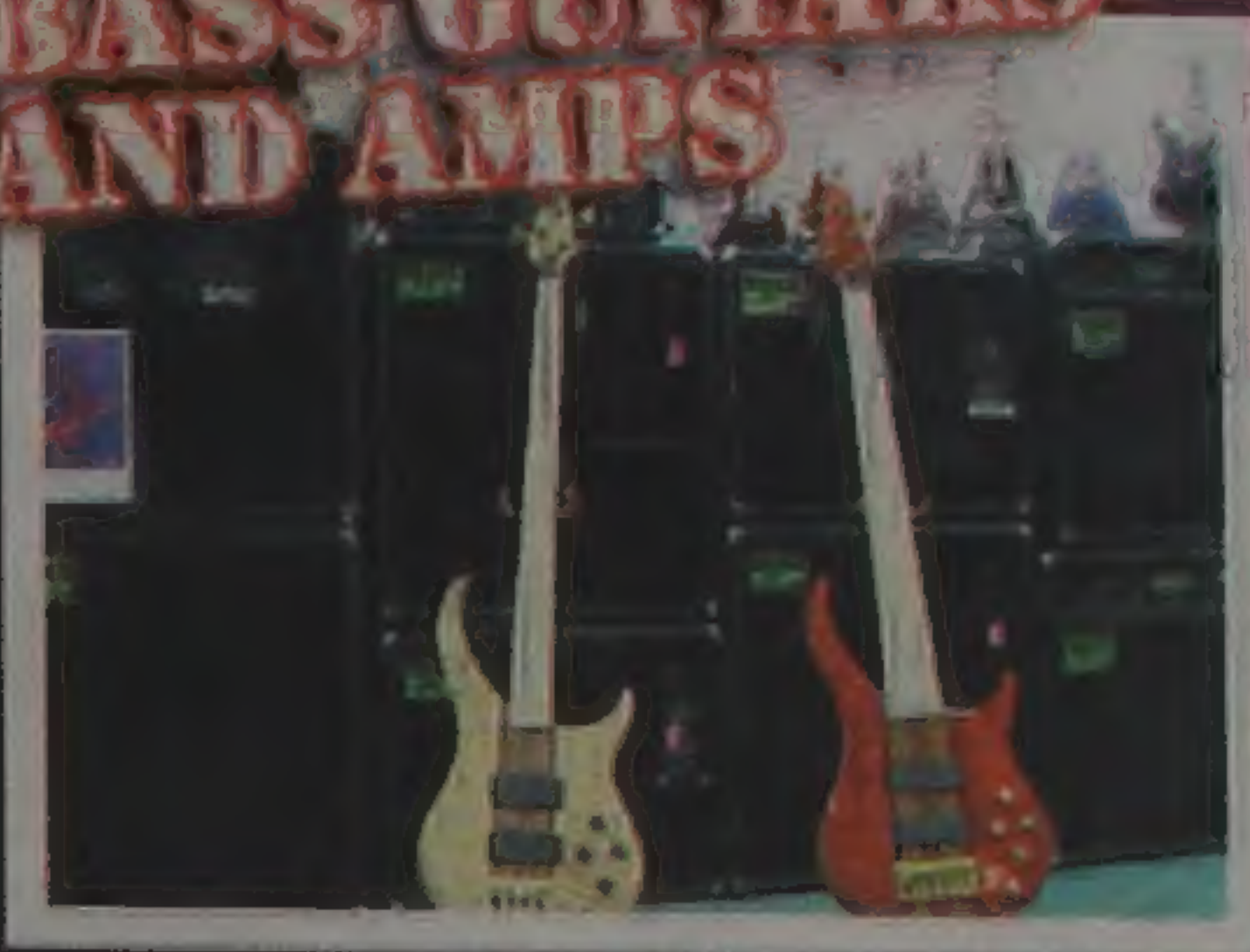


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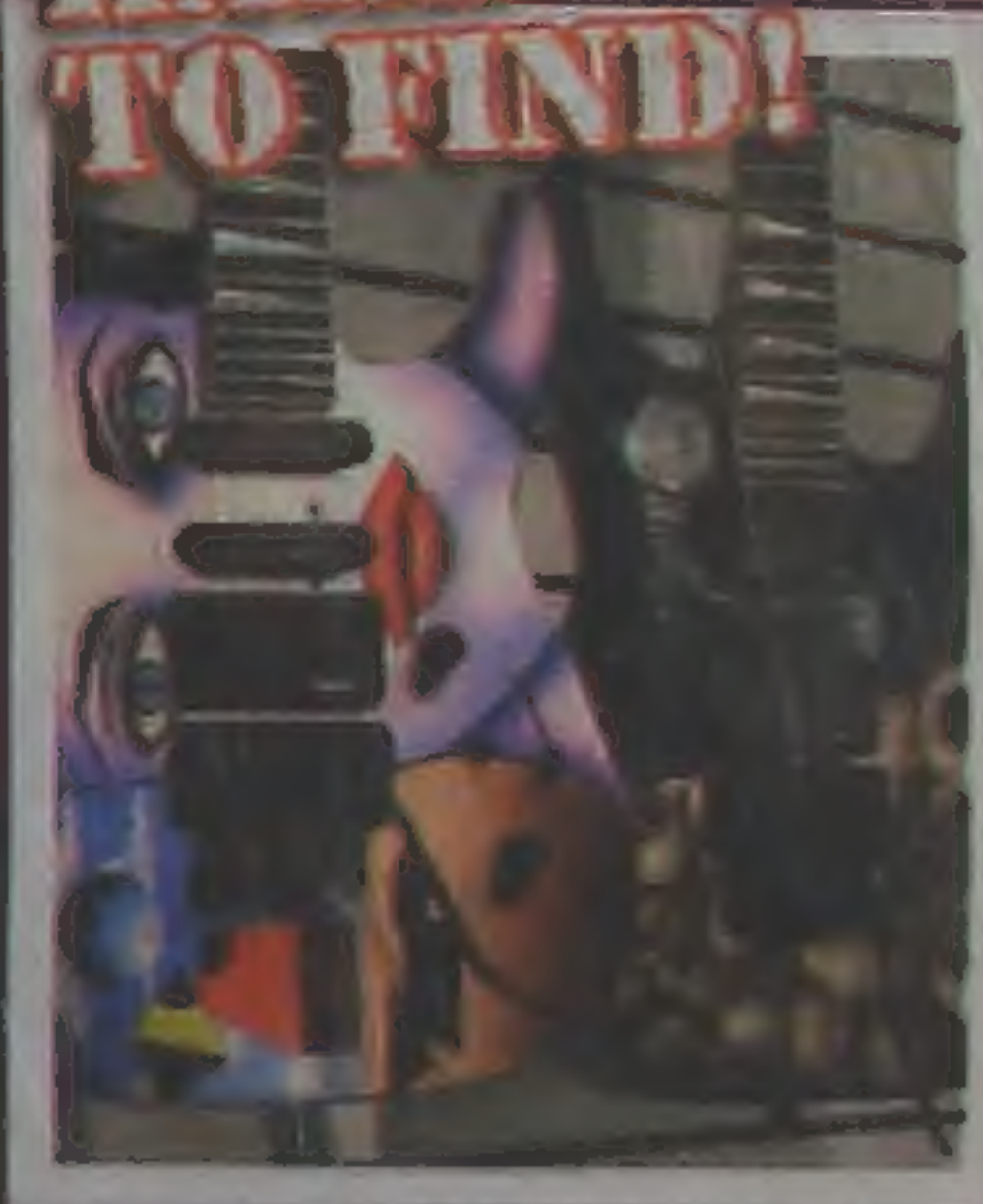
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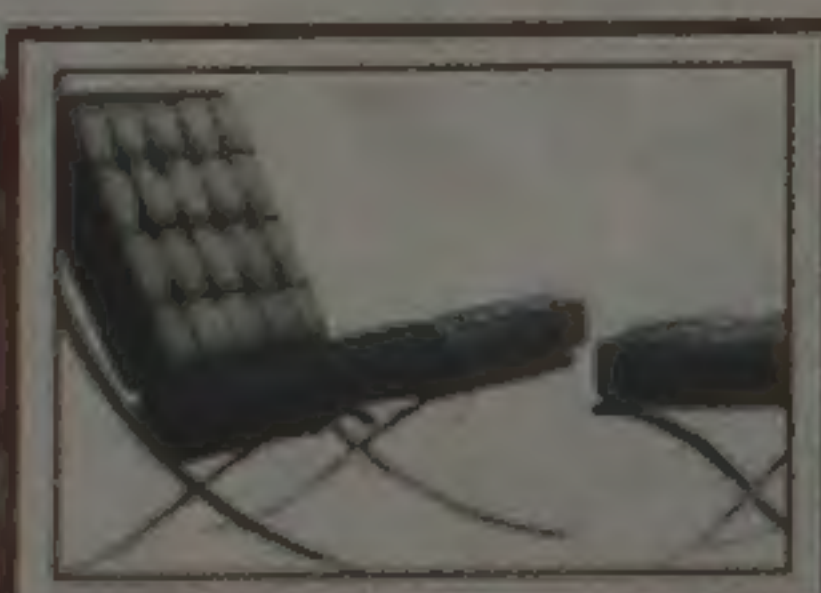
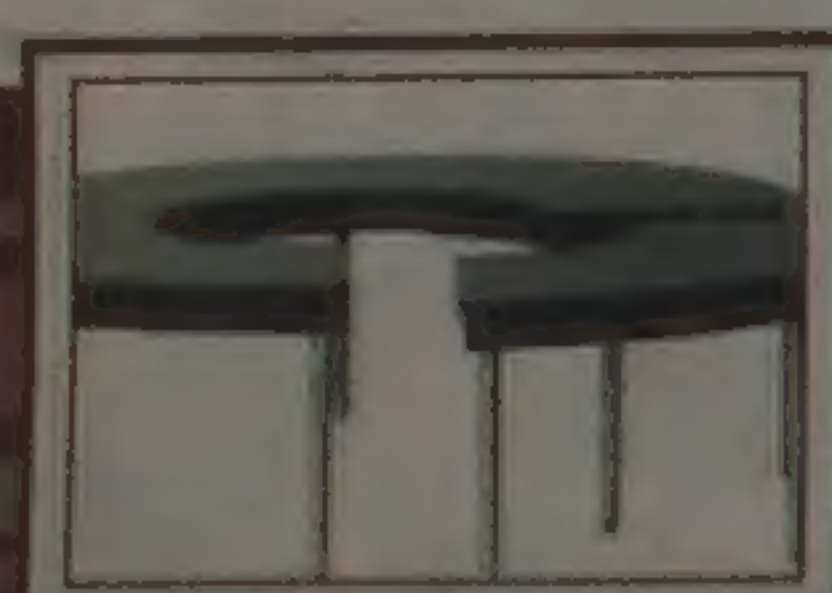
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Spot the typo!

We're not especially good spellers, as some of you are fond of pointing out, so we can pretty much guarantee that there's a typo, grammatical error or some other boo-boo in this issue. The first several people (rather arbitrarily chosen) to send an e-mail to carolyn@vueweekly.com detailing such a find win their pick from the pile of astoundingly horrible CDs in our offices. And we're losing the battle—our pile is closing in on 400. Help!

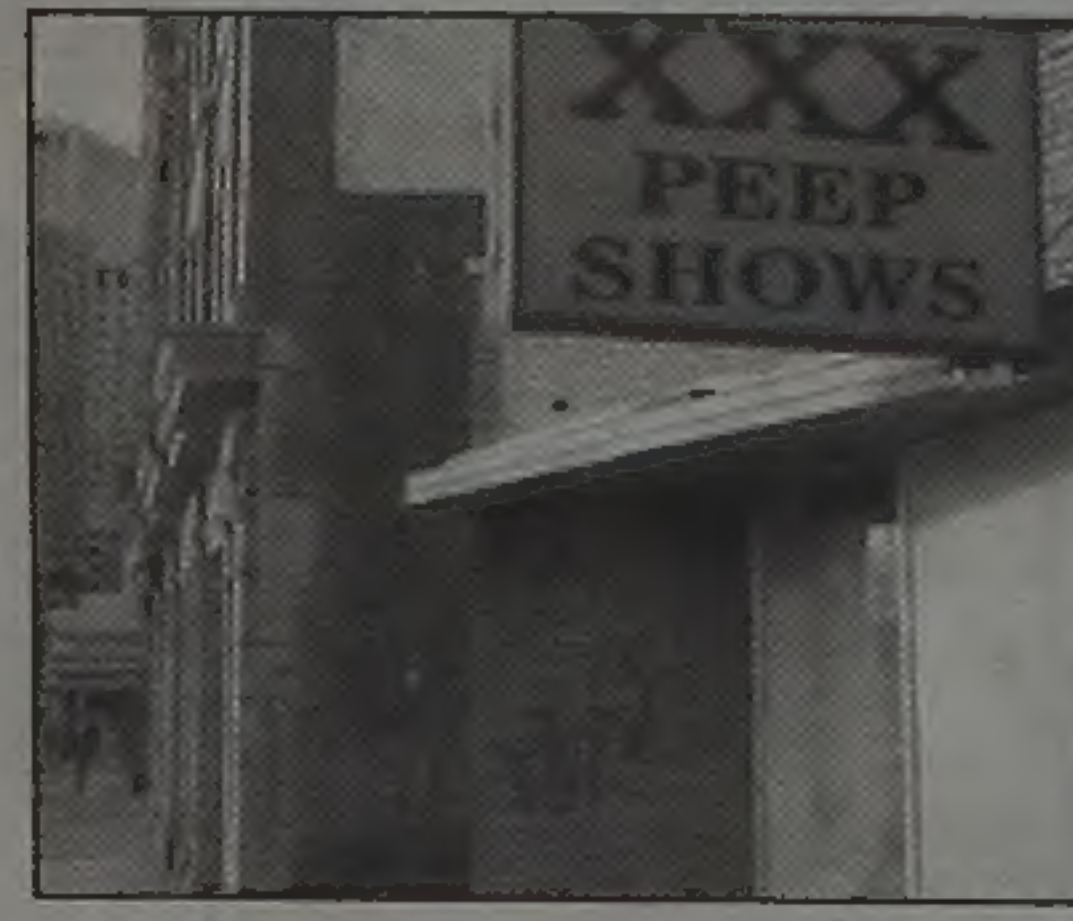
Last week, we made George W proud and referred to Chilean as a language, as well as discovered that someone reads the horoscope, as they pointed out a missing word in the text. Thanks for reading.

ON THE COVER



THE FRANKLINS / 65  
"Naw. We're leaving on a brown note. Like always." —Kenny Seldom, zombie bassist

NEWS



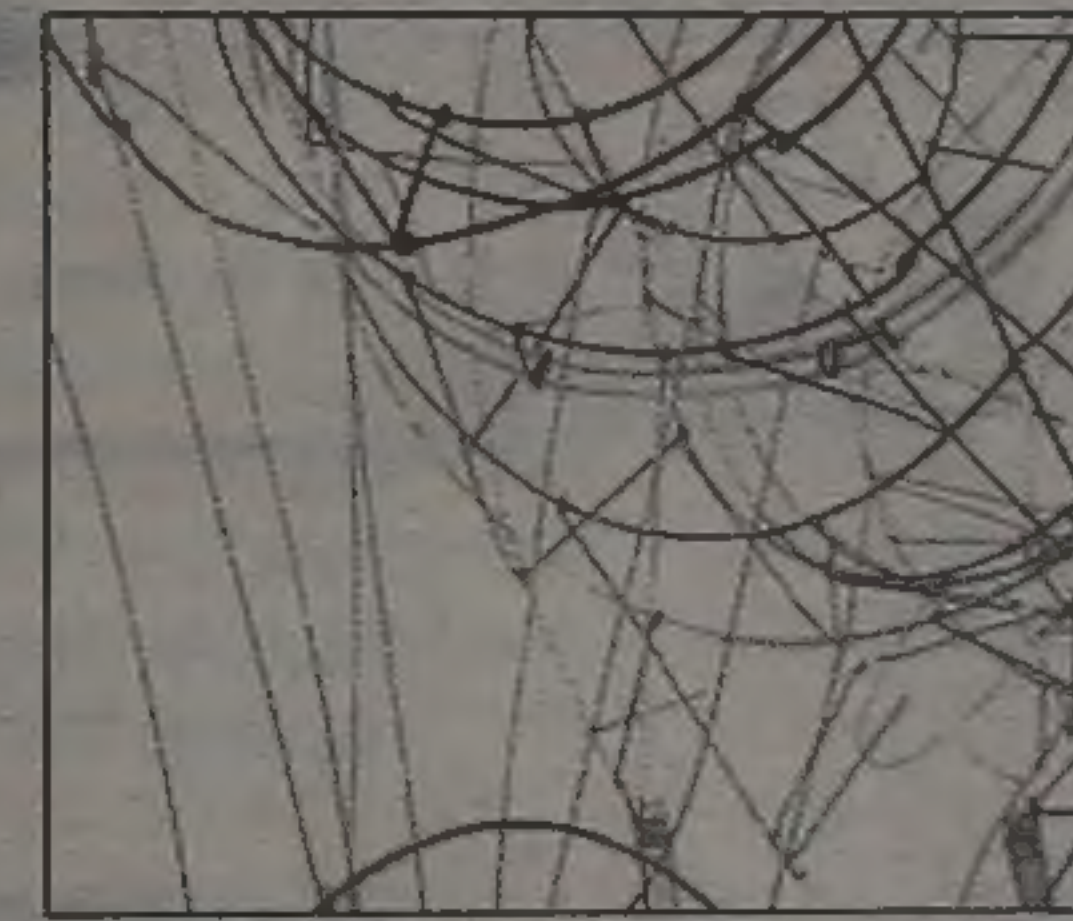
DOWNTOWN EAST / 7  
"We have a plan to have that plan. [In] this city today, it's difficult to find housing for lower-income people, partly because we haven't built it yet." —Bob Caldwell, project manager for redevelopment

DANCE



THE NUTCRACKER / 55  
"Peter puts so much passion and love into his conducting, and he's really supportive of the dancers. When you are out on stage you can feel how attentive he is to both the musicians and the dancers." —Alexis Maragozis, ballerina and Snow Queen

VISUAL ARTS



SCIENCE = MAGIK / 57  
"It's a slightly negative science thing. I have a reaction against science being seen as something that's going to save us." —Ike Bushman, U of A printmaking grad and skeptic

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DEC 31

BLACK DOG



## Not in my (luxurious) backyard!

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vueweekly.com

With a vacancy rate that hovers around the one per cent mark and with house and condo prices skyrocketing at a dizzying pace, Edmonton is not a very fun place to be looking for a new home right now, and there is every indication that things are going to get worse before they get better out there.

And I'm just a young, single guy. What about families? Edmonton is touted as a great place to raise your kids, but it's got to be hard to give little Billy a good head start in life if you can't put a roof over his head.

In a rare show of pragmatism and understanding, the municipal government is responding by embarking on an ambitious plan to develop unused land in residential communities—land originally set aside for schools that were never built—to build housing for young families trying to enter the real estate market. (To qualify, families must have a combined income of between \$60 000 and \$80 000 a year.)

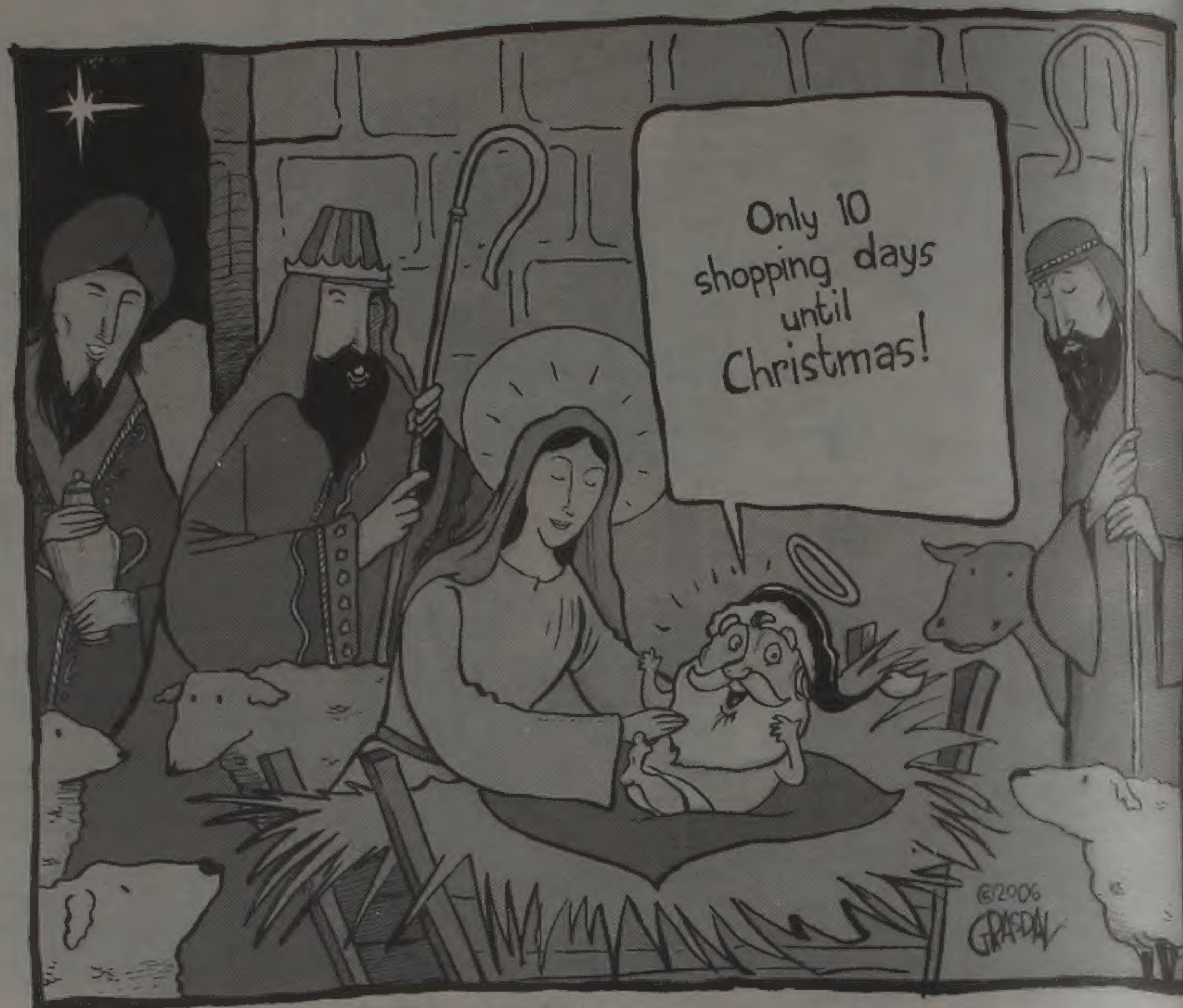
The plan has been met enthusiastically in most quarters, but residents of new-ish, upper-middle-class neighbourhoods like Brookview and Twin Brooks are vigorously opposing the plan, publicly fretting about damage to their property values (values which are, as mentioned, headed through the roof—just saying) and more quietly worrying about having to live in the vicinity of “those people”—you know, these deadbeat near-criminals who only make \$80 000 a year.

Certainly, any homeowner ought to be concerned with protecting their investment. And it's understandable that a neighbourhood of established families would be a bad place for “low-income housing”—that is, bargain-basement bachelor pads like those seen in Downtown-area projects.

But this is something completely different: these are young families with the same aspirations for personal safety, recreation and advancement as the pink-stucco-mini-mansion dwellers that seem to be so terrified of them.

And the real irony is that back when this self-designated privileged class entered the real estate market they themselves probably paid roughly the same amount for their now half-million-dollar homes as these young families will have to pay for their less impressive shacks.

At a protest outside a town hall meeting on the subject last week, Twin Brooks residents opposed to the plan held up signs with saying like “Stop this greedy deal!” In my mind, the greed lies on the other side. ▼



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## MAIL LETTERS

### FUCKING BANDS

After a friend emailed me your article about bands and their vulgar names (“Vulgar band names not that fucking interesting,” *Enter Sandor*, Nov 30 - Dec 6), I decided there would be no harm in reading said article and responding to it.

Yes, I am a member of Steven Sandor’s “favourite” band, the Fuck Around Kids, and I have to say, after reading the article, it sent me into a fit of joy, just seeing our name in print.

After years of playing songs incorporating the idea of shock value, one must realize that the dedicated fan base will soon diminish when they grow used to the humour and are no longer shocked. Shock value is no longer an easy fix to catch the attention of the audience. No, shock value takes just as much if not more work than writing quality songs and playing quality music.

Though I believe our music is not bad, I believe more that what makes the Fuck Around Kids worth while is a live show that not only gives the audience funny, shocking, lyrics, but also something fun to watch. Too many times you see a band standing still on stage and you might as well listen to the CD while looking at a poster, but with these shock bands, you know you're in for a damn good time. You can expect vain lead singers showing off their abs, short lead guitarists dressed as religious icons, homoerotic bass players in spandex, and buff drummers spitting on whomever comes close.

Music is music, and sadly nothing new seems to be hitting the streets in the last 100 or so years, but a show is something you call mom about, or avoid calling mom about. So I hereby invite you out to Chicago to see us live. In fact, I invite

you to stay at our house where three of the four band members live. We can play, you can watch, we can get dinner together, maybe even catch a show at Second City. Yes, a full vacation with a shock rock show to boot. What do you think?

OWEN (ONION) LOWERY  
THE FUCK AROUND KIDS

### FUCKING POLITICIANS

I applaud Niall McKenna’s pointing out the irony that the political parties themselves use fairer voting systems than they are willing to introduce for public elections (“New leaders, same old party politics,” Dec 7 - Dec 13).

However, I do take issue with his statement that “voters in BC narrowly rejected a form of proportional representation called the Single Transferable Vote.” How can 58 per cent support possibly be considered rejection? Only in a warped world where politicians can be elected to major governments with under 40 per cent of the vote, yet require the public to vote over 60 per cent in favour before they listen to us.

I trust that BC voters will reject this blatant obstacle to overdue and badly needed reform by overwhelmingly supporting STV when we vote again on it in 2009.

ANTHONY HODGSON  
DIRECTOR, DEMOCHOICE BC

*Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by e-mail (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.*





# Things'll be great when you're Downtown

## CONTROVERSIAL DOWNTOWN EAST PROJECT HAS A 'PLAN TO HAVE A PLAN' FOR LOW-COST HOUSING

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS / [chrisp@vuwweekly.com](mailto:chrisp@vuwweekly.com)

**W**hen asked why he lives near Boyle Street, Nathan Leach laughed. "Cheap rent," he said. It's close to Downtown, he continued, and, of course, there's great access to parking. He's somewhat less confident about the city's redevelopment plans for his neighbourhood, though.

"Look at the area," he said. "Look at all the people around. You can make something look nice but ..."

Leach points to Wyser Manor, the now infamous housing complex just down the street. When it first opened, he'd hoped to get a room there himself. Since the murder in the building this fall, however, he's glad he didn't.

It is, admittedly, a cold afternoon while we're out talking, but the streets are almost completely empty. In either direction, the only sign of movement is the occasional guest leaving the Mount Royal Hotel for the liquor store downstairs. It's a far cry from the neighbourhood Bob Caldwell, Project Manager for the Downtown East Redevelopment project, envisions.

"We want to allow people to have a full life-cycle in the neighbourhood, from childhood to adulthood," Caldwell said. He wants the area to become a district people choose to stay in for the long haul, and with the \$60 million the city recently announced it would invest to kickstart the project since it was put to council this fall, he thinks the municipal government now has the means to literally redraw the map in a way they've never been able to do before.

**OVER THE PAST FEW** decades, the area extending a few blocks north of Jasper Avenue and east of 97 Street has had

### NEWS | DOWNTOWN

a hard time retaining residents. Once the heart of activity in the city, it has been on a slow decline since a large amount of the land owned by the Hudson's Bay Company was sold in the early 1900s and commercial and residential activity shifted away. There is a fair-sized number of seniors living in the area, especially elderly members of the Chinese community, but there are more single renters than most districts of its size, and many of them are only sticking around until they can afford to move elsewhere.

"Our focus is going to be on visibly changing the neighbourhood so people who develop, and businesses and residents, will want to move in," said Caldwell, who added that eventually he sees the area resembling nearby Oliver and MacDougal.

One of the city's aims is to create more density in the area's housing. The neighbourhood's low population density (compared to other similar parts of town) means less local business activity and fewer people coming and going throughout the day, acting as "eyes on the street." The Downtown East project proposal drafted in August specifically notes that encouraging "a mixture of market-rate and affordable housing" will be key to promoting the balance and diversity the city believes will make the area more vibrant and livable.

In the 1970s, Old Strathcona went through a process of redevelopment similar to the current Downtown East project. Norm and Joanne Joly live and work in the Old Strathcona area and say the age and sense of continuity of the neighbourhood have a lot to do

with its appeal. It plays host to older houses, small condo units and large highrises, and its density and diversity mean many of the locals can walk to nearby stores and maintain casual relationships with neighbours on a regular basis.

"Connection to space translates into concern for well being of others," Norm Joly noted. As third-generation owners of a grocery store and a bakery/cafe on their street, the Jolys say they feel a sense of accountability to customers, who are often neighbours themselves.

As an example, they cited the outpouring of help this summer when Robert Barrington Leigh, an area resident, went missing in the River Valley. People from all over the neighbourhood, many of whom hadn't known him or his family, pitched in with the search. The Jolys themselves donated office space above the store for the rescue effort. They're not sure precisely how those kinds of community ties are built, but they add that a mixture of housing for different income levels "means people who have more feel more accountable to those who have less."

For all its successes, though, Old Strathcona's increasing gentrification means the cost of housing has gone up too high for most new buyers, and particularly for those unable to meet the average cost of market-rate housing in Edmonton today. Jason Chinn, a newcomer to the east side of Downtown, expressed similar concerns when he heard about the city's plans to bring more high-end housing into his neighbourhood.

"I would hope that the people who live here would still be able to," he said, "because there's a lot of places for older people and shelters and

things like that. If higher-end housing were here, I don't know where these people, or even I, would be moved to."

**THE PEARL DISTRICT** in Portland, Oregon, which the Downtown East planning committee is looking to as a model community, is slightly older than Edmonton's Downtown but went through a similar period of stagnation and drab uniformity of uses until developers began converting old warehouses into art galleries. In two decades, it has become a gold standard of district revitalization in North America, but critics argue the area's original residents—mostly lower-income individuals and artists—cannot afford to live there anymore.

Chinn also wonders whether other new residents would want to move into upscale housing next door to people living in lower-cost housing. Chris Willard, a visitor staying in the Boyle Street area, is skeptical too.

"People will get jealous of one another," he predicted. "The rich people think all of us are no good. They stereotype us right away, 'cause we're all poor. Not poor, you know, but we're surviving."

Michael Farris isn't daunted by the challenges the area faces as it becomes host to a denser mix of higher-end and affordable housing. He's the co-chair of the Social Action Plan component of the project and executive director of the Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation. Accommodating the district's current residents is a key priority for the city, he insisted, but contends that greater diversity will be an asset for everyone in the neighbourhood.

"Inclusivity creates a healthier community," Farris said. "It invites a mosaic of interaction that is very

healthy in any community, particularly talking about not only a mixture of housing but also commercial applications and so forth, so that people can shop in their own neighbourhood and create the vitality that is lacking any time that you have an area that has a single, exclusive use."

He said the area has been neglected and destroyed throughout the years by razing of housing inventory and heavy conversion of land into parking lots, which make up as much as 20 per cent of the ground cover in the area today. But he lauded McCauley's mix of social housing and upscale infill as a point of reference for the successes of diversity in an Edmonton neighbourhood. Its community league, he pointed out, is vital and active. Viable commercial fixtures in the area demonstrate the strengths of older areas—particularly where conditions are conducive to diversity and new housing, and uses can be mixed in and added in a positive way.

**BUT FOR DOWNTOWN EAST** residents like Murray (who declined to give his last name), it doesn't mean anything unless it is affordable. A local for 25 years, he's been living on the street since his unit, as well as several others, in the historic Brighton Block was declared unfit for human habitation earlier this year.

Ironically, the Brighton Block was where the city first referred residents displaced from the Lodge Hotel next door when the Canadian Ukrainian Museum and Archives, who own the Hotel, served notice to occupants of all 50 of its former housing units in anticipation of museum expansion.

City officials say the evictions from

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE





# Duncan wants a rematch in Edmonton-Strathcona

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vuwweekly.com

Linda Duncan clearly believes in second chances, and she's hoping voters in Edmonton-Strathcona agree.

After losing to Conservative incumbent Rahim Jaffer by slightly less than 5 000 votes in the 2006 federal general election, the local environmental lawyer announced this week that she plans to again seek the NDP nomination in the hotly contested riding.

In a statement released to media on Dec 7, Duncan claimed that she was "finally spurred to again take on Jaffer" because of her opposition to his government's environmental policy, the so-called Clean Air Act.

"We have ratified a lot of environmental agreements and conventions and protocols, and we are quickly eroding our international reputation by not living up to them," Duncan told *Vue* after announcing her candidacy. "I am fed up with putting friendly federal-provincial relations ahead of Canadians' health and environment. I plan to run a campaign for a strong Canada."

Duncan has thrown her hat into the ring fairly early: as of press time, the riding's NDP association has not even scheduled a nomination meeting (Duncan is not yet officially the party's candidate, although no other hopefuls have emerged as of yet), and there has not yet been any formal indication that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government has any intention of calling an election in the near future. However, because the 2006 election resulted in a minority Parliament, the next election could conceivably come at any time, although conventional wisdom seems to point to a spring vote.

"There are rumours afloat that an election might happen in the spring," Duncan agreed. "The logical time for some party to decide to bring the government down is during the budget, and the vote on the budget will likely happen at that time."

IN LIGHT OF THE RIDING'S characterization as an

## NEWS POLITICS

area popular with artists and progressives, not to mention the fact that it includes the University of Alberta and surrounding neighbourhoods popular with students and academics, it might seem a little odd that Edmonton-Strathcona has been represented by the Conservative party or one of its various component parts for over three decades.

Jaffer has represented the riding for almost 10 years, having first been elected as a member of the Reform party in 1997. Previously, former schoolteacher Hugh Hanrahan had represented the riding as a Reform MP since 1993, and before that the Progressive Conservative party had held Edmonton-Strathcona since the early '70s. Duncan, however, says she is not deterred by the fact that the NDP have never held the seat there.

"Well, provincially it sure isn't a Tory riding," she laughed. "The entire area is represented by Liberal and NDP [MLAs], so I guess it's just a matter of time until we get the message out that we can also have a bit of representation federally."

Duncan also said she is not worried about the prospect of seeing her support shift to the Green party, although she is well aware that the 3 000 or so votes that party's candidate earned in the 2006 vote would have gone a long way to helping Duncan topple Jaffer.

"Frankly, the message from the Green candidate in this riding last time was, at the end of every forum, 'I hope my votes don't keep you from getting elected,'" Duncan revealed.

"I guess I would say to Green supporters: do you want to have a strong environmentalist elected, or do you just want to raise more money," she continued. "I would say, if you want to support the Greens, send them a donation, but vote for me, because I have the best chance of beating Rahim Jaffer." ▼

# Can we continue the walk of life beyond the Moon?

COMMENT

## DYER STRAIGHT

GWYNNE DYER  
gwynne@vuwweekly.com

It was vintage Stephen Hawking. This month, the world's most famous astrophysicist, receiving the Royal Society's Copley Medal, Britain's highest scientific award, used the opportunity to warn that "the long-term survival of the human race is at risk so long as it is confined to a single planet." So we must go, as Buzz Lightyear would put it, "to the stars—and beyond!"

Hawking first became famous for his triumphant career in science, despite being almost totally paralyzed by a motor neuron disease: the Royal Society's president, Lord Rees, said he had contributed "as much as anyone since Einstein to our understanding of gravity." His best-selling book *A Brief History of Time* made him wealthy beyond the dreams of the average Cambridge professor of mathematics. At the age of 64, however, his main concern is the future he will not see.

"Sooner or later, disasters such as an asteroid collision or nuclear war could wipe us all out," Hawking said after the ceremony. "But once we spread out into space and establish independent colonies, our future should be safe. There isn't anywhere like the Earth in the solar system, so we would have to go to another star."

By sheer coincidence, just three months ago a decision was made to take the first baby steps in that direction: "We're going for a base on the Moon," said Scott Horowitz, associate administrator for exploration of the US space agency NASA in mid-September.

It was part of the roll-out of NASA's plans for the new spacecraft that will replace America's ageing and accident-prone shuttle fleet, which will be retired in 2010. The Orion vehicles will revert to the simpler methods of the Apollo spacecraft that flew the manned moon missions in 1968-72 (that is, by launching into orbit atop large rockets and descending back to Earth by parachute), but their technology will be half a century better.

THE FIRST JOB of the Orions when they enter service in 2014 (after an embarrassing four-year gap when US manned space missions must depend on European, Russian or Chinese launch vehicles) will be to meet American commitments in support of the International Space Station. By 2020, however, chief NASA administrator Michael Griffin promises that an Orion will carry a four-person mission to the Moon, the first human visit in almost 50 years. But this time, he said, the visitors will be going to stay—and to "extend human presence across the solar system and beyond."

The base will be near one of the Moon's poles,

as those are the only parts of the surface where there is continuous sunlight to provide power (and there may even be frozen water available in some of the craters). It will serve not only as a science centre but a possible stepping-stone to Mars. That's about one hundred times as far away—the first step out of the wading pool and into the ocean—but manned missions to Mars are now officially on the agenda as well.

"I can't believe that we're not already living and working on Mars," said Elliot Pulham, president of the Space Foundation, an industry trade organization, in response to NASA's September announcement. "It's a shame we wasted the past 20 or 30 years, but we do need to get back on track and get on with this sooner or later."

It is a bit late, but full credit to President George W Bush, who responded to the latest shuttle disaster in 2003 by becoming the first American leader to get serious about space flight in decades. The question is whether the commitment will survive Bush's departure in two years' time: a Congress bitter about the lost war in Vietnam gutted the funding for the first US Moon project, and a Congress bitter about the lost war in Iraq could do the same again.

This time, however, the United States is no longer the only major player. The European Union and Russia are currently doing a feasibility study for a joint rocket and manned vehicle program based on their existing Ariane and Soyuz technologies. In Asia, China is already in the manned space-flight business, and both Japan and India have clear ambitions in that direction. With or without American involvement, bases on the Moon are likely in less than 20 years, and on Mars in perhaps another decade.

That doesn't really add up to "independent colonies" that satisfy Hawking's criteria, however, because human beings cannot live anywhere in the solar system apart from Earth without hugely expensive and vulnerable life-support systems. To find other habitable planets we must go to the stars, a journey many tens of thousands of times farther than the trip to Mars.

Barring some completely unforeseen scientific and technological revolution, that will not happen in this century. But unless global civilization suffers an early and comprehensive collapse, the logic of human history suggests that it probably will happen eventually, one way or another.

Will that finally make us safe from extinction? A little bit safer, maybe, but any technology that can take us to the stars can probably also destroy whole planets at interstellar range. No matter how far we go, we can never get away from ourselves. ▼

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears regularly in *Vue Weekly*.

## DOWNTOWN EAST

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the Lodge Hotel had more to do with health concerns than with the redevelopment plan, but it reflects the city's lack of planning so far in accommodating residents who will be displaced by the project.

"We haven't made great progress on that," Caldwell conceded. "We have a plan to have that plan. [In] this city today, it's difficult to find housing for lower-income people, partly because we haven't built it yet."

Affordable housing subsidies announced by the city last month will go some way to alleviating the steeply rising costs of housing, but with

options like the Brighton Block at the top of what the city can provide, it's not hard to see why it is having a tough time housing people.

Murray said the severe housing shortage leaves him cynical about the city being able to accommodate residents displaced by the redevelopment plans.

"What the city doesn't understand is people don't care if the building is [declared unfit for humans]," he insisted. "They're going to move to worse conditions."

He's also unsure if people living in higher-end housing will want to live next door to low-income residences.

"But I sure would like if it was subsidized," he admitted. "And maybe, believe it or not, it could end up one of them." ▼



## Parliament okays gay marriage. Again.

MURRAY BILLET / [www.equal-marriage.ca](http://www.equal-marriage.ca)

It's this simple: three years, three votes and three prime ministers have validated equal marriage. The fact is that same-sex couples in Canada can be married. Period.

Since the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on same-sex marriage, the matter has actually been subjected to six separate votes, which, quite frankly, puts a "super size" validation on equal marriage for all.

Critics have stated that this matter was rushed through Parliament, but nothing could be further from the truth. Here are the facts. On Sep 16, 2003, an Alliance motion opposing same-sex marriage is put forward by then leader of the Opposition Stephen Harper and is defeated 132 to 137. On Apr 12, 2005, Harper's motion to kill Bill C-38, the Liberals' same-sex marriage legislation, is defeated 132 to 164. On May 4 of the same year, Bill C-38 goes to a second reading, and is passed 164 to 137. On Jun 27, the report stage vote on Bill C-38 is passed by a vote of 154 to 124; the next day, the bill passes third reading, 158 to 133. And just last week, on Dec 7 of 2006, Parliament voted not to re-open the issue by a count of 175 to 123.

At long last, the debate appears to have finally ended, as well it should. Over 12 000 same-sex marriages have taken place in Canada as gay couples, their friends, families and their children celebrated their love. Marriages celebrated out of love and respect for each other together with their families and friends just like any other Canadian couple—what a Canadian concept!

I am puzzled by those in the extremist minority that speak of "family values" and "natural" this and "traditional" that. I feel very sorry for any of their family members who are gay or grow up to be gay. Discrimination and intolerance are taught at home. What kind of role model are you in your family?

Like it or not, historically speaking, members of the GLBTQ community always have and always will be raising children. In fact, there are many gay men and women in straight relationships raising children, as there always have been.

You would think that history has taught us a few lessons. It was not that long ago that woman could not vote. Slaves were bought and sold in the "natural" and "traditional" ways of the world, as it existed in years past. At each step forward the "righteous minority" has always pushed back—

"Oh my, women voting, that is certainly not the 'traditional' way of our society." If you are "coloured," you certainly should not be going to school with the white children, nor should you be allowed to sit at the front of the bus. It's only "natural."

**PLEASE ENGAGE IN** some personal critical thinking about your beliefs. Equal marriage is simply extending the same rights, responsibilities and obligations to those of us who have been sitting at the back of the bus for far too long. In years to come, historians will look back and view same-sex marriage as analogous to women's right to vote. It was simply the right thing to do.

The road to equality for any minority group is incremental. Take some time to do a historical review of equality rights in Canada. There is a reason we are so respected on the international stage. I am thankful to Canadians and our politicians who have been courageous in standing up for human rights, and I take tremendous pride in our country being a world leader in this field.

We still have a long way to go on equality rights for Canadians, however. It is a fact that women are still earning less than men, racism still thrives and homophobia is still a reality. Recent Edmonton Police Service statistics on hate and bias crimes in Edmonton validate these realities today. In 2004, the GLBTQ community suffered the most crimes against them as an identified group, followed closely by members of the Jewish community (in 2005 the Jewish community led, followed by the GLBTQ community).

The mind is like a parachute: it functions best when open. That goes for all of us, and I mean everyone in all communities. Those of us in minorities are at times guilty of discriminatory practices against each other. How can we expect the larger community to accept us if we too discriminate? As a parent you are responsible for modelling equality, dignity and respect. As adults each of us is responsible for leading by example. May I respectfully request that you do your part and think about the status of your parachute? ▼

*Local human rights activist Murray Billet is the Alberta representative of Canadians for Equal Marriage. He is also the proud father of two grown sons.*



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*It turns out you can be festive without becoming festively plump this season*

## HEALTH | WELL, WELL, WELL

CONNIE HOWARD  
[health@vancouverweekly.com](mailto:health@vancouverweekly.com)

It's party season, which means good times, and—for diabetics and those trying not to pack on the extra holiday pounds that never do come off in January—good times tempered by food and drink challenges. I think I'll tape this little rule to the top of my computer screen: simple sugars (and elevated stress levels) increase insulin production (which stimulates a gremlin-like chemical that stimulates hunger), which stimulates weight gain (and potentially Type II diabetes).

Actually, it's a double whammy, because the other little thing insulin does is increase the feeling of pleasure we derive from eating, the wanting more, not because we're hungry but just because it was so good.

Fibre keeps insulin levels down, though, and it helps break down fat. The bad news is that many (probably most) of us eat less than 10 grams of fibre a day, when we should be getting two or three times that amount—20 to 30 grams. This is almost impossible to do if we're eating white bagels, corn flakes, white rice—even lettuce and orange juice have less than a gram (and in some cases less than half a gram) per serving.

Squirrely bread's good though, as are apples, beans, peas, shredded wheat, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat pita, sweet potatoes, potato skins and rye crisps, all weighing in at five or more grams per serving.

Who eats like that all the time though? And who doesn't eat shortbread and drink Baileys over the holidays?

Holidays are one thing, but year-round simple-carb, fibre-deficient eating spells serious trouble. It is the dark energy behind our Type II diabetes and heart disease epidemics. Our pancreases have to produce more insulin than they're happy to, double what they did even 30 years ago. High fructose corn syrup, which dra-



matically stimulates insulin production, is added to almost everything now, even high-fibre "health" foods. So even though we may have become expert at avoiding Twinkies and Coke, we're likely still producing more insulin than is good for us, unless of course our pancreases have gone on strike and are no longer producing enough (as is the case in Type II diabetes).

And this is slightly depressing, but some researchers are now saying there's another reason for the obesity epidemic. Our ability to evolve and adapt has filtered many of the skinny genes out of the gene pool—genetic wiring most inclined to keep some fat stores on hand are the ones that have survived the famines of our history. We're programmed to survive, but with ever-available processed-food supplies at our finger tips, we're getting fatter than ever.

**OKAY, SO I'LL TRY NOT** to have shortbread and Baileys every day—just like I've vowed to spend less time showering in electro-magnetic radiation (EMR). Which, by the way, is okay anyhow they tell us—cellphones (and computer and TV screens) pose no health risk.

But then why are insurance companies nervous? Why are they talking about potentially fatal consequences for their business and about preparing themselves for judges ruling in favour of complaints on the EMR injury front?

Maybe because, even though the recently reported study on cellphones and cancer showed no correlation, many other studies on EMR have shown strong correlations with a whole list of health problems, things like abnormal stress responses and elevated cortisol, which are implicated in obesity, high blood pressure, heart-disease, chronic fatigue,

depression, altered immune function and anxiety.

We'll carry on, though, surfing and chatting and watching and playing games, until we're all completely zombified. It's how we live.

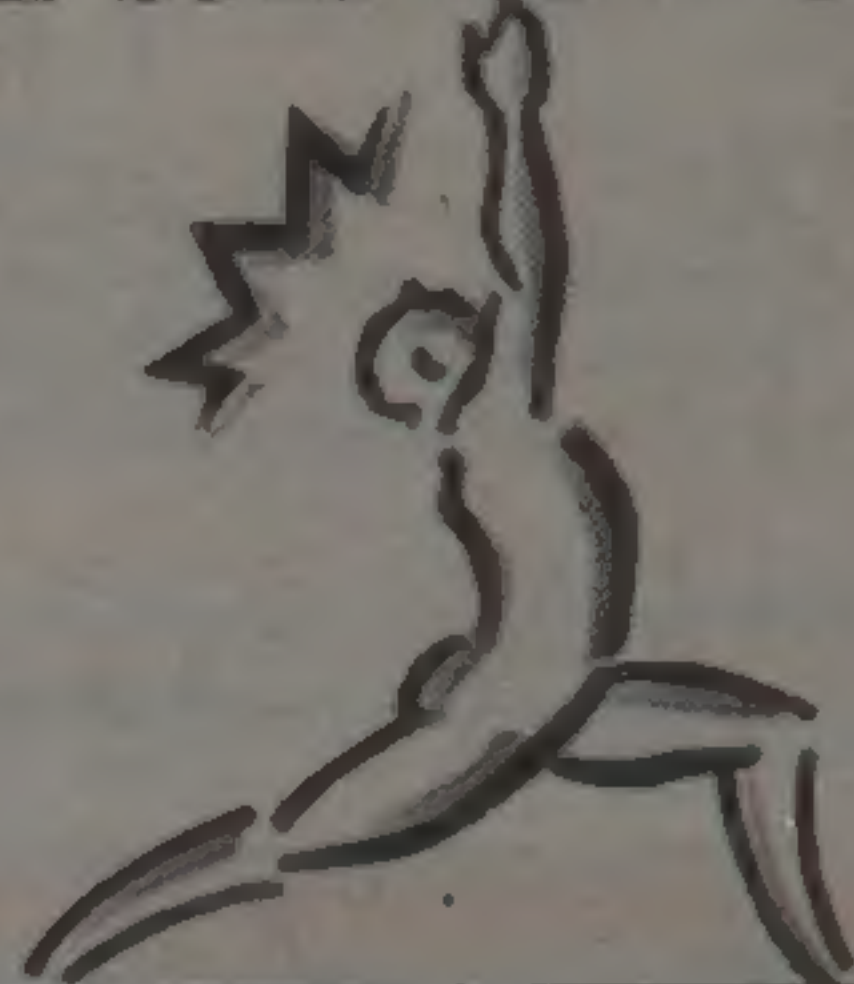
I did find a couple of bits of cheerful health news to focus on though, thank goodness.

Exercise is, finally, being recommended in bite-sized pieces, as long as you accumulate throughout the day. (Which is perfect for me, who is bored a few minutes into a walk or a run and finds Pilates routine palatable only when it can be done in under 10 minutes.)

And for those (mostly over-functional caring, nice, loyal kinds) hesitant to end painful relationships, doing so and replacing them with more positive ones is sometimes an absolute health necessity. Relationships prone to what researchers and psychologist John Gottman calls the Four Horsemen—stonewalling, criticism, defensiveness and contempt—are a health risk, as they create serious health problems, eroding anger in the recipient.

I think I'll add those to the growing list of happy health-inducing things I've written about recently. Friendly, generous people. Bite-sized exercise sessions (as long as they add up). Beer, wine and sex (as long as they don't add up too much). Fun physical activities (dancing, snowboarding, walking, skating, anything you enjoy). Taking breaks and naps and holidays. Music, parties, friends and anything that makes us laugh. Whole wheat pita with hummus or feta and garlic dip. Squirrely bread, apples and a pile of other foods weighing in at over five grams of fibre. And, of course, moderation with respect to holiday shortbread, chocolate and Baileys. It's not a bad idea, really. Happy holidays, everyone!

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# DISPATCH

by JARREN ZEMKO  
j.dispatch@vnewsweekly.com

are you drinkin' wine for?"  
eyes narrowed just a touch from totally  
ly, smile with a bit of steel in it. Not  
ssarily a fight-picking face, but a  
that's seeing if there's a fight to be  
ed. Family Christmas in a big one-  
cabin somewhere in the unpulped  
ests of Blue Ridge, and I'm a  
inger—a recent introduction via a  
rt introduction, needing to be  
ked out. Who am I? Will I scare? Thin  
disguise of plaid flannel and army  
is shredded by the truth of bottom-  
shiraz burbling into a beer cup: I'm  
White City as they come—am I some  
of fuckin' asshole?  
Well, I guess I just feel like drinkin'

ee, we drink whisky." Plastic tum-  
held up by example, five fingers and  
mb—a fist, really—of Jack sloshing  
nd its knuckles of crushed ice. "Who  
ou here with?"  
ndicate my fiancée across the room,  
ing with newfound family. Half-cut  
soften in understanding; all is  
ame and I'm off the hook. "Ah. That's  
um n' proper side of the family."  
le introduce ourselves properly,  
ange a few pleasantries re: the value  
orting (since his last assault convic-  
t, Jody's got himself a good job and  
it do that much no more, though he's

proud to see his son showing a bit of  
two-fistedness), and I head back to the  
circle of prim 'n' propers to guzzle my  
goblet of pussy city-boy Christmas Cheer  
in peace.

So strange a situation. This is my girl's  
recently revealed birth family, people  
she's known only slightly longer than  
she's known me, and here we are in the  
middle of ancient annual tradition, speed-  
reading the room for maps and monu-  
ments, the lines of fault and force that  
bind and divide, the Albertan intricacies

"See, we drink whisky." Plastic tumbler held up by  
example, five fingers and a thumb—a fist, really—of  
Jack sloshing around its knuckles of crushed ice.

"Who are you here with?"

of race and role, position and priorities.  
Handshakes and hugs, turkey and cab-  
bage rolls, liquor and cigarettes ... yes.  
Cigarettes. Good idea!

Outside on the unrailing deck, the  
kids are doing flips down into a five-foot  
snowbank as the smokers chuckle and  
chatter and create those wonder double-  
clouds of secondhand and breath-vapour.  
I light up, wondering for a moment  
whether my fussy Dutch clove ciga-  
rettes'll earn me the same ride my wine  
did. Feeling speculative, sentimental ... I  
was born around here, too, and also  
adopted away; wonder if any of these

laughing folk are blood cousins, kin ... or  
.. oh, shit ... if my girl's from around here,  
then maybe ... ?

No! No way. Now's not the time to let  
my mind ride down that line, man. Just  
enjoy the bubblegum taste of herb-laced  
tobacco reacting with wine-buzz and con-  
temple the moon ...

## OH, YEAH! THE MOTHERFUCKIN' MOON.

Hey, does anybody mind if I set aside this  
fuzzy family holiday tale for another time  
in order to talk about the moon for a sec-

ond? OK. So, I just read about how  
NASA's announced its intention to estab-  
lish a permanent manned moonbase by  
2024. Neat-o space cadet wish fulfillment  
value aside, this is the stupidest god-  
damn moneywasting idea in the cosmos.

Look, I know astronauts are cool and  
everything, but the only thing in space a  
human can do better than a robot is die.  
The main task of a moonbase, on a tonne-  
for-tonne, kilowatt-for-kilowatt basis,  
would be keeping people alive. It will be  
its own reason for existing.

There is no legitimate science reason  
for putting people on the moon: the FIVE

HUNDRED BILLION DOLLARS this dumb-  
fuck space clubhouse will cost to get up  
and running could launch a thousand  
missions—to Mars, to the Sun, to our  
own beautiful Earth—and immeasurably  
enrich humanity's knowledge of the cos-  
mos and our wonderful, mysterious home.

Fuck the fucking moonbase. There is  
nothing there for us, despite what the  
ridiculous '40s-vintage helium-mining  
fantasies they're spinning say. Here is a  
complete list of the moon's benefits to  
humanity: it looks nice.

I mean, it really, really looks nice.  
Hanging there, waning away, outshining  
the stars on a cloudless night. Its only  
competition is the orange glowing steam-  
cloud cloud of the pulp mill on the horizon.  
"Come on, dad! Just do it!"

I snap back from space. Tough-guy  
Jody's being goaded by the apple of his  
pugilistic eye into flipping off the deck.  
He peers over the edge like it's the lip of  
a canyon rather than a six-inch drop into  
five feet of snow. Sense and sobriety do  
battle with whisky and lifelong daredevil  
instinct across his nervous-smiling face  
until his wife (or whatever; I just got here,  
myself) puts in her \$0.02:

"For fuck's sake, Jody! You've got a  
good job; don't break your fucking back!"

FLOOMP into the snowbank, a perfect-  
ly cushioned backflop. Sometimes all it  
takes is the concern of a good woman to  
remind a man of his party responsibilities  
... and these people take their responsi-  
bilities seriously. ▽

# TOP 10 RINGTONES

- 1) Smack That feat. Eminem Akon
- 2) Lips of an Angel Hinder
- 3) Irreplaceable Beyonce
- 4) My Love Justin Timberlake
- 5) Sexy Back Justin Timberlake
- 6) Maneater Nelly Furtado
- 7) Enter Sandman (Chorus) Metallica
- 8) Money Maker feat. Pharrell Ludacris
- 9) You Don't Know Eminem
- 10) White & Nerdy Weird Al Yankovic

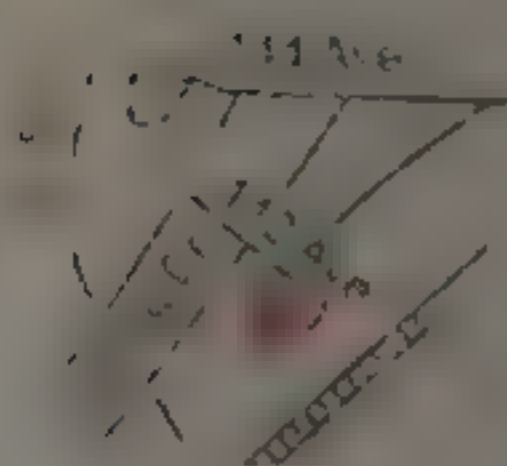
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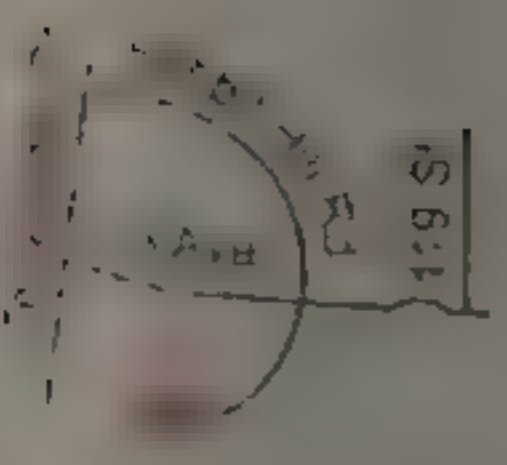
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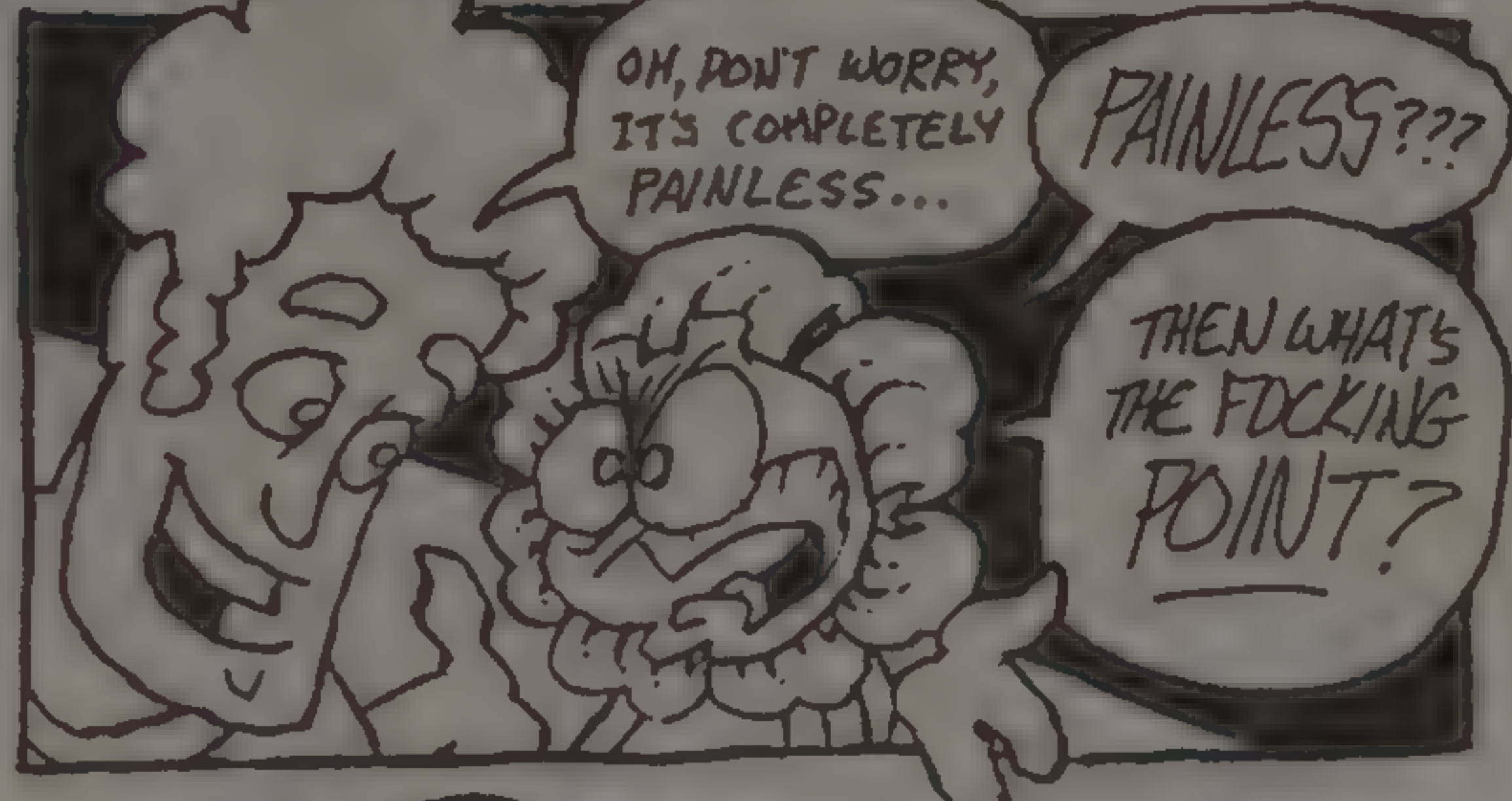


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## Roller-coaster ride continues for the Bipoilers (and their fans)

### HOCKEY | IN THE BOX

DAVE YOUNG AND TB PLAYER  
inthebox@vuwweekly.com

Here's another week of Oiler hockey in brief. Oiler fans enjoyed a 3-1 home win against the former Hartford Whalers (now the Carolina Hurricanes in case you're on the way to the movie reviews and not 100% hockey literate—welcome, by the way) and a rare road win in Dallas over the former Minnesota North Stars (now the Dallas Stars if you're still with us). But the week ended poorly with a 4-1 loss to a former NHL contender, the Chicago Blackhawks (they've been pretty much crap for a while now—yes, they should not have beaten the Oilers) and a 3-2 loss to the Nashville Predators. (Nashville? Hockey team? Yep. And they're pretty good, too.)

**THE PSYCHIC FRIENDS' FOOTBALL LEAGUE?** I hate to say it, but I may already know how the season will pan out for our Oilers. I have been in a fantasy NFL league for a while now (TB was too, but he quit) and last season, my team barely squeaked into the playoffs, finishing in eighth place. Then the mighty "L'E-quipe Bifteck" (gawdawful nicknames—a definitive element of the charm of fantasy sports) fought through the playoffs to the final, losing in a very close game. Sound familiar? Just wait. I beat the number one seeded team in the first round (the Iron Maidens; the Oilers beat Detroit) and the number five seeded team in the second (faux football-land: The Slackers; Oilers-land: San Jose—fifth seed in the west). We had no third playoff round like the Oilers did, beating the Ducks, but in the Championship my pretend NFL team lost by six points to the Palm Spring Chill, the team that finished in second place overall. The Carolina Hurricanes finished in second place in the Eastern Conference. I know. Weird. So, last weekend, this season's make-believe football team finished

in sixth place but lost to the third place team (Fighting Shoe Salesmen) in the first round of playoffs. There it is. It's a loss. The Oilers will finish sixth in the west and lose in round one. Sorry. Maybe the guys should have let me win this year.

**WHAT WOULD YOU DO?** Alright, here we go again. Last year we needed a bona fide number one goalie, this year we need a top two or three D-man who can move the puck. Last year we waited until the deadline to make a deal, and squeaked into the playoffs with the help of a stunning Vancouver. Will Lowe wait that long again this year? Should the Oilers wait until the team drops out of contention? Or should they maybe overpay a bit now to make sure they get what they need and wait? And who are we willing to give up to make this happen? Email us and let us know who you think the Oilers should trade, and who you think is expendable. Other than, say, me and Dave T.

**START SPREADING THE NEWS** A neat little tradition has started out east and, much as I hate looking to other NHL teams for inspiration, I would love to see the Oilers continue a tradition initiated by the New York Rangers that has already spread to the Buffalo Sabres. After a win, the Ranger players gather at center ice and lift their sticks to the home crowd and actually acknowledge the fans with a team thank-you. I'm not saying Oiler players are distant or aloof (not in Country; they love their fickle, hot and cold, verging-on-stalker fan base here), but a little ceremony like that gives the fans a chance to give one last cheer to the home team. I'd heard the tradition started with either Henrik Lundqvist or Deron Kaspairitis. It's not an uncommon practice in European football and with only two Euros on the Rangers squad, it's embraced by the team somewhat. I know and I hear the fans just love it. Sykora. Start it up. You were in New York for a few minutes last season. Or

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JATO Without Smyth's grit in the  
and Hemsky's finesse on the half-  
and power play is looking  
imp. I swear, no one wanted to  
puck on the PP in the Chicago  
everyone seemed so afraid to fail  
I would try anything  
best of passes or dump into  
but it's also ineffective  
was to make me cuss  
I would say it was very effec-  
TB

**FINALLY BROUGHT ON AFTER**  
**CRASH** A quiet little nick-  
for the Oilers has surfaced in the  
Oilosophy, the assortment of  
things out there. The  
s. Win five in a row. Lose four in a  
Get shut out by a crappy team  
(bus). Shut out two good teams  
and Vancouver—OK, one good  
the typical summary but  
wolves prolonged per-  
alternating with  
of rounds. Yep. Pretty  
at the time TB

**ALERT!** I recently got my hands on  
of EA Sports NHL 2007 for my  
They've changed a few things since  
played, but it seems to be getting  
and more realistic all the time  
of the coaches—they all look like  
Hamilton in that "baked, not  
commercial). The most fun for me  
paring the players in the game to  
real-life counterparts. Here are  
of my observations regarding a few  
virtual Oilers:  
**Hemsky:** Great stickhandling, but if  
touches him he falls over  
**Smyth:** A scoring machine. More  
than in real life.  
**Torres:** A giveaway machine.  
not.  
**Andre Bergeron:** Super fast.  
**Colson:** Can stop anything  
floaters from the point.  
**Wanov:** Yeah, he's still on the ros-  
he's a frigging tank.  
**Face:** Also still around. Ineffective;  
he wants to be somewhere else.  
**Byer:** League MVP. Gotta love  
video games. TB

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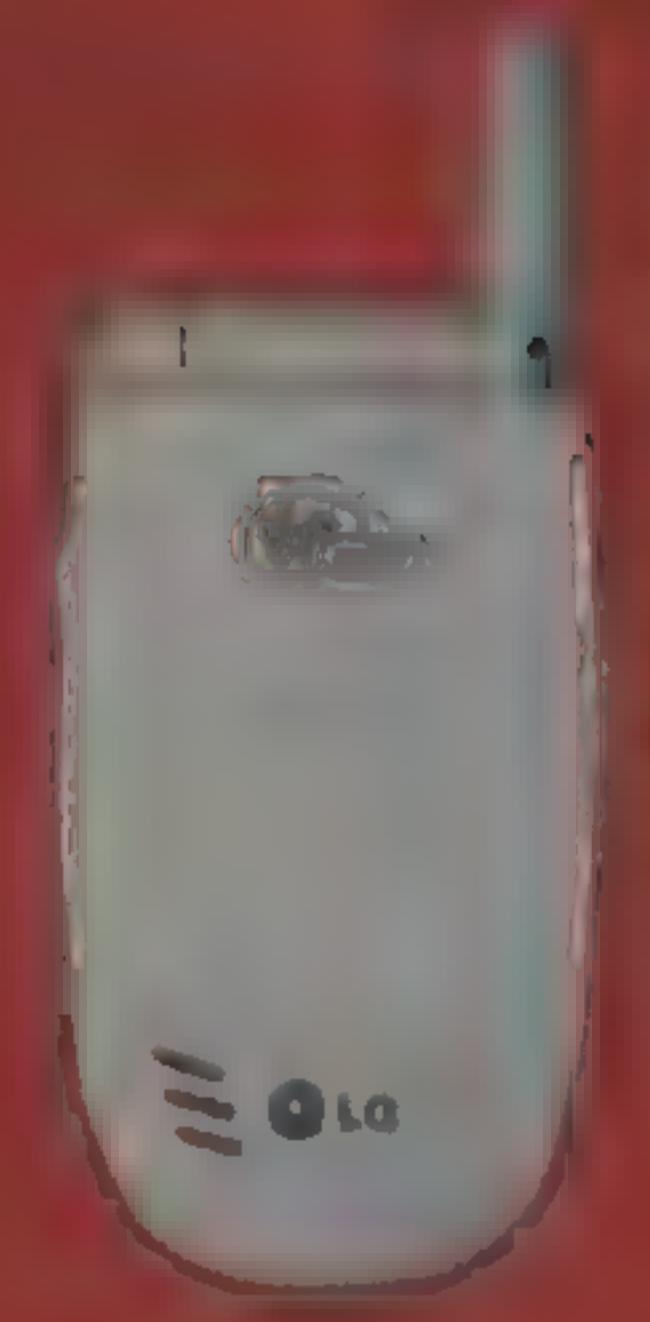
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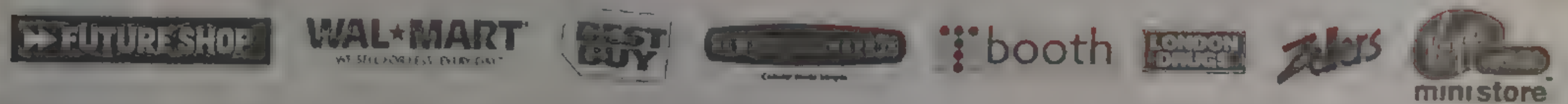
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# You can cut loose, Footloose in a Caboose

JENNIFER MARIE LEWIN / jennifer@vuwweekly.com

It is harder to explore Alberta in the winter. Unless you are equipped with a Skidoo and heat packs strapped all over your body, merely pulling your car out of the driveway is all the adventure you need in a day. Once in a while, however, break the apathy and venture out to somewhere new.

It was a nasty, snowy evening that saw my family head out to the **Footloose Caboose Lodge** near Tofield. My directions were hastily scribbled on a napkin. Fortunately, with no wrong turns and travelling slightly below the speed limit, we arrived at the friendly caboose in just under an hour.

I would have liked to arrive during daylight to see this circa-1909 dining car from the outside. Built by the Canadian Pacific as an observation car, the Mount LeFroy was the way to travel back in the day. I made a mental note to come back for a weekend brunch to observe the grounds as well as the station house.

Inside, the small, charming room was festooned with holiday cheer: red velvet bows and pine boughs hung from the curtains. With seats for only 20 or so, the car was full and I was glad that I had made reservations. Our server was busy, and it took us awhile to get our drink orders—hot chocolate for my daughter (\$2), the usual Coke (\$1.50) for my husband and a ginger peach tea (\$1.50) for myself. Hungry from the long drive, we also ordered the grilled ginger shrimp (\$8.50) to start.

Settling in with our drinks, I was able to take a good look at the menu.

FOOTLOOSE  
CABOOSE LODGE

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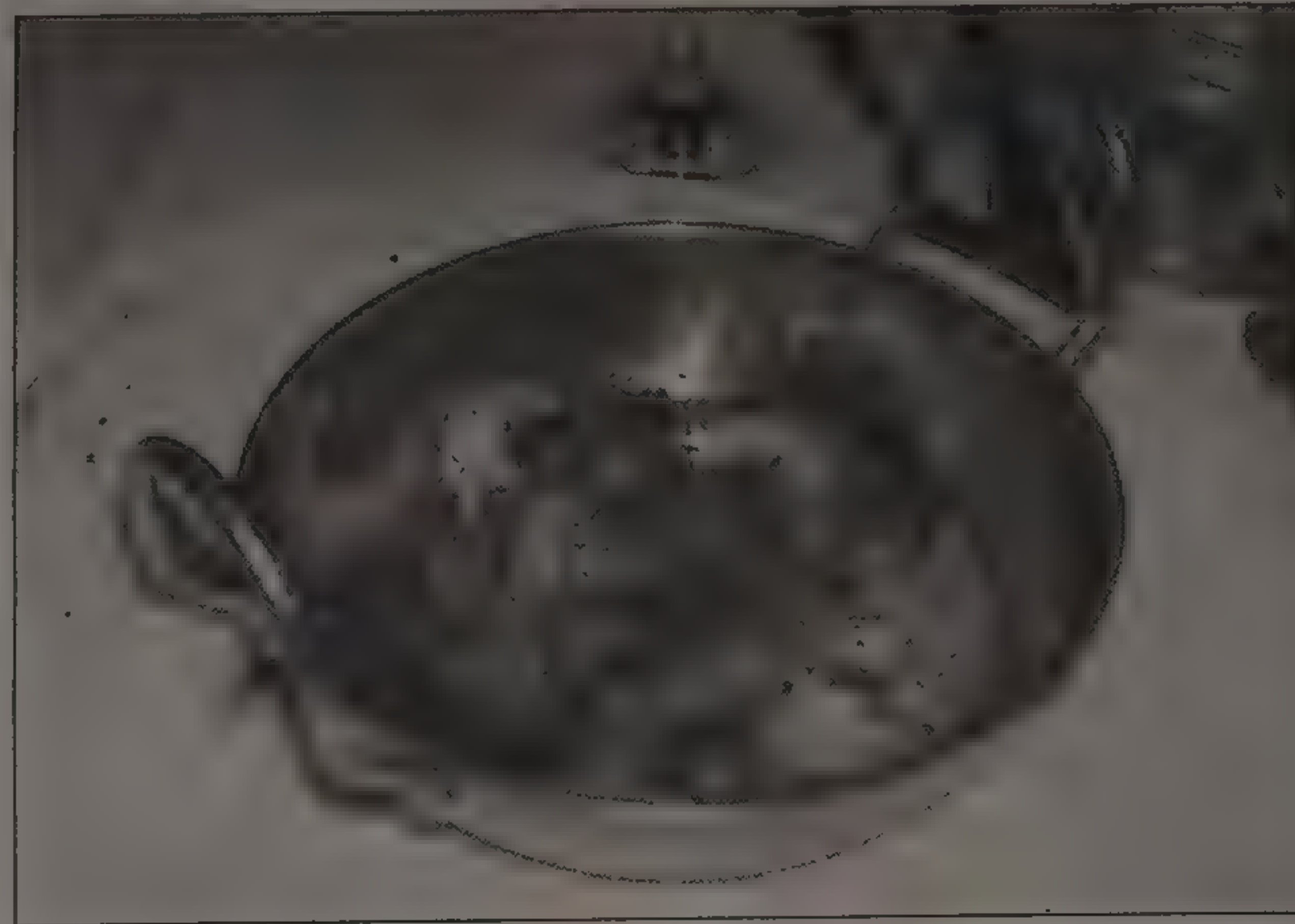
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The two pages held the typical mix of beef, pork, chicken and seafood dishes; although, the menu receives points for creativity for dish names such as the Orient Express, Station House cutlets, and the Box Car burger. Typically drawn in by such antics, I avoided the interestingly-named dishes and sensibly decided on the pan-fried trout (\$15.50).

My husband has loved Hungarian food since we ate our way through Budapest many years ago, and quickly picked the Hungarian Chicken Danube (\$16.50). My daughter, pleased with her surroundings, agreed to the bowl of soup and grilled cheese sandwich (\$6) off the kids' menu. Although this was a more upscale restaurant than what we would normally take her, I was pleased to see that both the service and the menu were accommodating.

**WE TOOK A SMALL TOUR** of the dining car that included photos of the restoration and information of the Mount LeFroy's time period. For a reasonable fee, we could even sleep in a refurbished caboose on the property. I hinted to my husband that this would make a particularly good Valentine's Day gift.

By the time we returned to our table, only a short wait remained for the appetizer. The silver bowl was filled with plump, tasty shrimp sizzling



in herb butter, although neither my husband nor I could detect any ginger in the dish. The "crusty bread" that accompanied the dish was nothing more than a small piece of underdone garlic toast. Fortunately, this was the only disappointment of the meal.

Shortly after our appetizer plate was cleared, hot bowls of soup were delivered to our table. The bowls were surprisingly large, which was a good thing since that garlic mushroom soup was delicious. I don't normally care for mushroom soup; Campbell's ruined it for me. This one was golden and creamy, however, with a mild taste of garlic and parsley. The slivers of mushrooms mixed well with the spiral pasta swimming in the bowl, making a perfect dish for a blustery night.

It was quite a wait for our main

courses, but the pile of food that finally did arrive matched the accumulating piles of snow outside. My plate contained a boneless rainbow trout stuffed with herbs, complete with head, and a mound of fried potatoes. My husband's dish looked just as full and inviting: his large chicken breast was smothered in paprika cream sauce with the same side dish.

Although my daughter enjoyed her cheesy grilled sandwich, she was fascinated with my trout—particularly with the head. She declared that it had a "happy sort of face," and she enthusiastically devoured it when I offered.

The crispy skin gave way to tender white meat, and it was quite satisfying not having to pick out all the bones. The parsley stuffing gave the fish a fresh flavour. Large chunks of

golden pan-fried potatoes sat on the side, and I found myself happily finishing the meal.

My husband, on the other hand, acted like he hadn't eaten for a day. One bite of his chicken and he stood why. It was marinated and pan fried to lock in its juices. The succulent meat was then doused in a slightly spicy, deep red paprika sauce. Although my husband wasn't a fan of the sauce's mound of onions, I thought they rounded out the dish with a touch of sweetness.

Thoroughly enjoying the meal, I decided to ignore the weather and stick around for dessert. Our server chose a deep dish brownie (the only chocolate option out of 10 available). I was enticed by the crêpe (\$5) and my husband decided to share from both of our plates.

The brownie was slightly melting—not deep dish at all—just a little cut square of chocolate on a plate. Although my bite was store-bought, this did not detract from my tablemates, and they all dove in. On the other hand, my husband was clearly home made. The winner of the evening. Juicy slices of fruit were embedded in the brownie while butter and syrup dripped deliciously off the top. If the scenery did not tempt another bite, the crêpe sure did.

We waddled out like little men, \$75 lighter including tax. Although the glory days of a road were probably a more fun time to dine, I was extremely grateful for our heated car trip home. We'll try a visit during spring.

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# his lounge shouldn't Bank on image alone

excited when I first entered the Bank on Friday night. I was dining with my brother, and knew this was a great place to go. Even in the '50s, it was one of the city's hippest places to dine. My brother and I don't get many chances to go together, so I was thrilled to see the overall ambience of The Bank trendy and inviting.

On the main floor, the room circled a central raised dais that featured one of three bars and several tables. The design broke the room into several more private areas, which suited smaller groups.

In addition to its privacy, I loved the metre ceilings and the huge rectangular sconces that gave the room a retro look. The lighting was warm and I was swept away to a Rat Pack era Hollywood bar, expecting Humphrey Bogart to round one of the corners at any moment.

When my brother and I arrived at the restaurant on a Friday evening, the restaurant was surprisingly quiet. Besides a few work colleagues enjoying drinks, the bar was relatively empty. We settled our seats in a corner with a great view of Jasper Avenue, ordered a couple of dollar-off cocktails and flipped through our menus.

After some preliminary online research proved they hadn't updated their web-site and I was holding a new list. In making our choices, my brother and I argued a bit before we discovered that we were each looking at dif-

ferent versions of the carte. Our server stated that one of the two was not current, but wasn't sure which one. She finally just asked us to tell her what we wanted.

We decided on calamari (\$8), and bruschetta (\$8.50) for appetizers, but our server informed us that they had neither. No problem. We tried the beef samosas (\$9.50) instead.

There were four or five entrées to choose from—a couple of burgers, a steak sandwich, some wraps and quesadillas. I selected the steak sandwich (\$10), but they had just sold the last one. I reluctantly settled

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on the barbeque cheddar and swiss burger with fries (\$9.25), and my brother chose the broiled chicken burger with fries (\$9.25).

**WE SAT BACK** and I took a sip of my Money Maker (\$7.78), which was a sweet combination of peach schnapps, crème de banana and Malibu rum with a splash of orange and pineapple juice served in a martini glass. Our server returned to let us know that they were out of beef samosas, but they could substitute chicken. By that point I would have eaten cat-food samosas.

Our burgers arrived, followed several minutes later by knives, forks and

napkins. I asked about the samosas, and was informed that our server only had two hands. Clearly the concept of appetizer, something meant to whet the appetite, was foreign.

Despite the order of appearance, I very much enjoyed the beef burger, which was topped generously with onions, tomato, lettuce and two cheeses. The bun was cold, but otherwise quite tasty. My brother found his chicken breast burger similarly topped, and he thought it was nicely flavoured with the ranch-style sauce and cheddar cheese.

Our chicken samosas came after we had begun the burgers, served with a sweet chili sauce for dipping and chopped tomatoes and onions on the side (which might have made a great bruschetta). The samosas were warm, wrapped in crisp pastry and mildly spicy. We both agreed that they were the highlight of our meal.

We had time for one more drink before heading back to our separate lives. I went for a Done Deal—Soho lychee liqueur, raspberry Sourpuss, 7-Up and cranberry juice (\$7.78), and my brother had another white rum and coke (\$4.01). The Done Deal was not the drink for me—too bitter for my liking—and I left it unfinished.

Our bill came to \$55 before tip, and we both felt a little let down by the evening. A hip image is exciting, but a good restaurant needs to keep its website up to date, and stock sufficient provisions to serve what's offered on the menu. ▼

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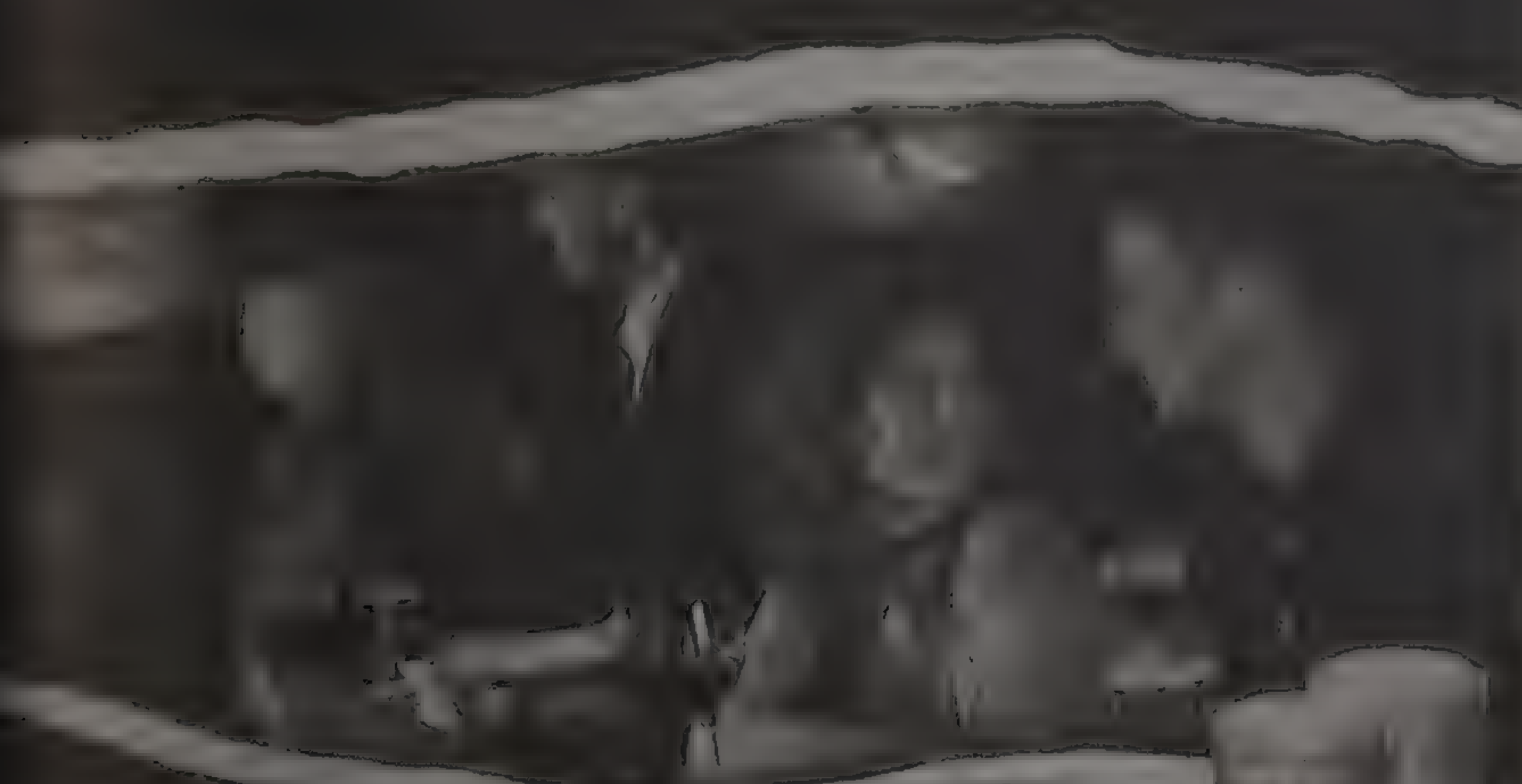
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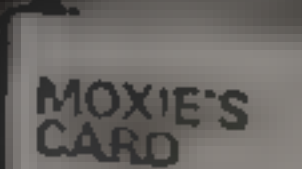


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# Ale'll lift your kilt on a winter night

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Okay, we all knew it was inevitable. The mercury dropped, the Sorels came out of storage. Winter arrived, and there's not a damn thing we can do about it.

We can't bring back those heady days of shorts and t-shirts, but we can make the frigid season more bearable. The way to do it is to explore a range of beers suitable for winter consumption.

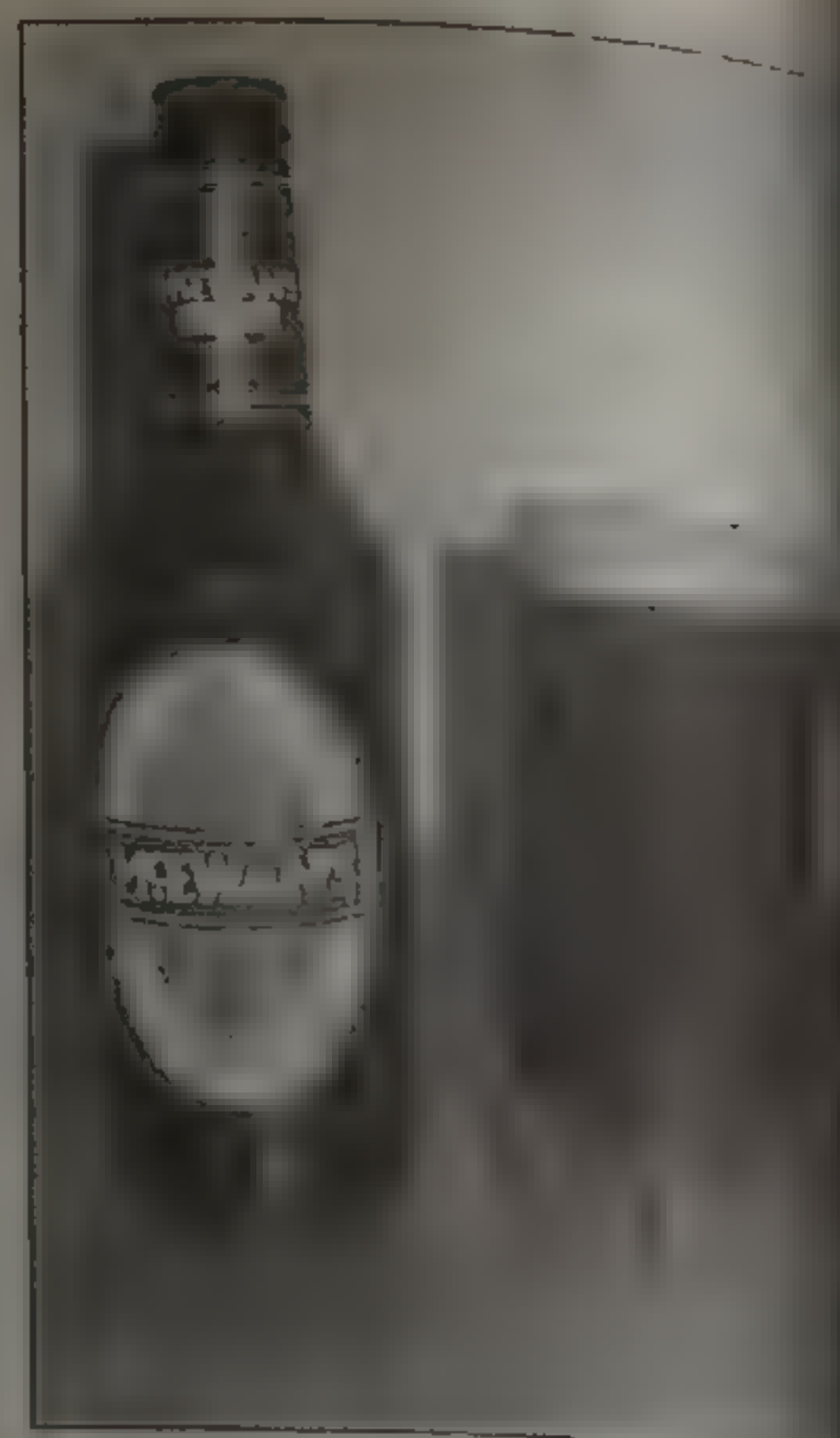
In the summer, beer is light, easy to drink and ice cold. In the winter, a beer needs more body, more colour and likely more alcohol. Like switching from sum-

mer salads to hearty soups and stews, a fuller-bodied, darker beer is both filling and comforting. Plus, that extra punch of alcohol warms your body on a cold night.

Let's start with a classic winter beer—the Scotch Ale or "Wee Heavy." The biggest-selling version is McEwan's. This beer is perfect for nights spent cuddling under a blanket with your sweetie to conserve body heat.

In 1856, McEwan's brewery opened in Scotland, but a series of mergers and acquisitions have put it in the hands of one of the world's mega-brewers, Scottish and Newcastle. Although the Ale is a shadow of its former self, it remains a substantial beer worth sampling. Offering a dark brown colour with distinct ruby hues, the properly-poured glass is topped by a creamy white head. Its aroma is deep and malty, with caramel tones.

The taste offers three powerful sensations. The first is a rich, caramel malt flavour with a little nuttiness and just a



hint of smoke. The second is a pleasant alcohol warming that spreads through your body. McEwan's runs eight per cent alcohol-by-volume, and the warming sensation is what sets this beer apart. The third sensation is so pleasant. In recent years, the beer has developed a sourness that suggests a sour handling. It doesn't occur in every bottle, but frequently enough. I put it down to mass production and lengthy shipping.

Risk aside, a glass of McEwan's Scotch Ale will fend off the chills and leave you toasty and warm on a winter night. It's not a timid beer, but who wants timid when it's -25 degrees outside? ▽



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Dish Weekly spills the beans on happenings around town. Got an announcement or some unsubstantiated gossip? Email dish@viveweekly.com or fax 426.2889.





## It's what your life can truly be, a Silverstar for you to see

SMITH / smith@vancouverweekly.com

located in the Western bosom of the Monashee range, a short drive northeast of Vernon, BC is Silverstar.

The mountain, for some reason, seems to have avoided popularity among the younger demographic, especially among younger Canadians, despite the fact that it regularly garners top in the media, including Best Mountain and Best Powder props from *Canada*. Everyone I met at Silverstar was Aussie; ownership is also tied to an Aussie, the same gentleman who owns nearby Big White.

Silverstar is also among the few remaining mountains that still hosts a majority in snowboarders. It's a stellar phenomenon since the mountain has a lot to offer, even to those who aren't interested in a time-ski, and there is a true ski-in-ski-out right in the heart of the slopes.

The community at Silverstar is a small, enchanted little village that is nestled in its outrageous, magical mountain-esque design to be real or really occurring. But although this Disney Mouse magic is purely paid for big money, it's done rather well. Comforting, and it's not in your fact, the village shop isn't

### AREA

even priced too dear, despite its clear monopoly, and the staff were aware and proud of that fact.

After our hellish sojourn through Rogers Pass and along the Monashee Valleys, we checked into the Chilcoot Lodge, our private slice of this mystical bonanza. The rooms were spacious and comfortable despite the *Shining*-like abandonment of the early season.

The lodge is just above the village on the mountain slopes and has a nice rooftop hot tub. As we unwound from the drive in the therapeutic waters, we were surrounded by the sounds of the mountain. Meanwhile some enterprising chaps from the hostel snuck in and joined us in the tub—more internationals who had signed up to work Silverstar without knowing much about it at all. They considered themselves lucky.

**EXHAUSTED FROM OUR** drive, we crashed early. When we woke up, strapped on our gear and hit the snow just steps from our room, the drive was instantly worthwhile. On the mountain, although there are some

long and dedicated traverses, there is a lot of challenging and interesting riding to be done. With a respectable peak of 1915 metres, and 760 metres of vertical drop, the hill covers a lot of area while maintaining enough elevation to allow a decent amount of steep drops and a huge variety of intermediate riding, including the newly opened Silverwoods area.

There had been snow all week, and my friend Marcus and I thoroughly tore up the front side through the early morning. We checked out the main runs and were amused by the mingling of the village and the slopes, many runs cut intimately through populated areas, even over roadways and bridges.

Not knowing our way about, we decided to follow a couple of local kids who looked like they might be going somewhere interesting. We traversed to the right from the new and ultra-fast six-man Comet Express chair and ended up scaring the young lads as we followed them silently on a lonely traverse and short hike over to the Altridge section, which is slightly more difficult to access until the Alpine Meadows Chair opens for the day. The limited lift access on this side allowed the five of us a nice set of

fresh turns on a steep unadulterated bank under the rising sun.

A few hours later we met up with Steve Threndyle, the hill's friendly media rep, who took us on a tour through the oddly and distantly situated backside. The freshly opened backside terrain sits at a shouldering angle to the face of Silverstar; it is a long traverse away, but is full of steeper, better gladed terrain to satisfy more aggressive riders. Steve showed us a few nice lines, pointing out the stunning Monashee views as we went.

In this backside wilderness, we also stumbled onto a log cabin shack with a raging woodstove serving pints, food and hot drinks, a friendly and robust spot in the isolated backside terrain.

**FOR THE MAJORITY** of the afternoon we explored the backside, among treed Jedi runs and wider paths of less resistance that still boasted fantastic early season pow, and only the odd surprise core shot to remind skiers and boarders that a lot of snow still needs to fall.

Among the chutes and glades of the free mountain we stumbled across a strange sight. Dressed in bright yellow jackets marked RCMP were three

power-, I mean, powder-hungry cops on the ski beat!

I was informed that they have been bothering kids smoking joints in the trees for 15 years with their luxurious program. Though I have never seen them on my travels, they informed me they are losing weight all over BC and the Rockies.

Although the terrain park is not set up yet, the mountain boasts a rather impressive array of rails and boxes piled on a temporarily closed run, but they should be in use by the end of the month.

After riding hard for the first days of our respective seasons, we retired to find Andrea, the beautiful girl we had abandoned at the Magic Carpet in the morning, chilling in Chilcoot luxury.

After several drinks with the Silverstar management and some visiting Brazilian journalists, we stumbled towards the village. The boomtown, saloon-style bars and pubs along the village walk were buzzing quietly on this Wednesday evening but might have easily become a bedlam on busier nights. After a couple more drinks in the rustic surroundings, we walked back to our cosy Victorian lodgings under a bright moon, and the snow slowly began to fall. ▽



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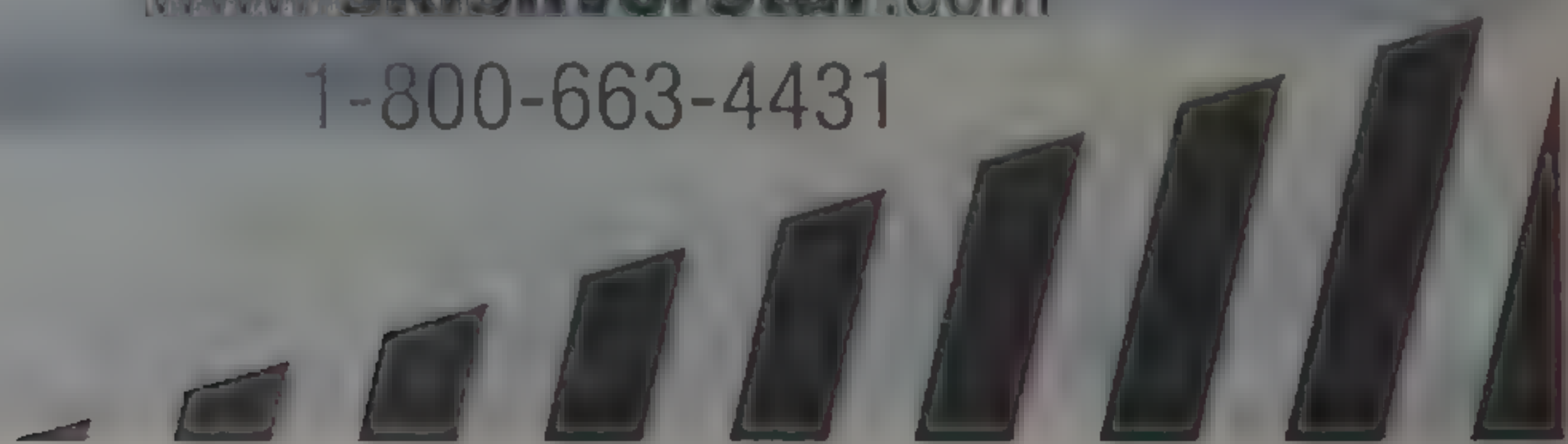
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## Me and Edi down at Snow Valley

HART GOLBECK / hart@vuweekly.com

**Y**ou might not expect it, but some of the best ski racers in Canada have trained right here in Edmonton.

Edi Podivinsky, a 1994 Olympic bronze medallist in Downhill, started his memorable career at **Snow Valley** Ski Club, the local hill nestled in the Rainbow Valley just off the White-mud Freeway. Today, many young athletes frequent the hill, perfecting their turns and hoping to follow in his tightly carved path.

Chelsea Donelon started skiing at Snow Valley 10 years ago. Now a grade 10 student at Scona Composite High School, she joined the racing team at the age of four. Last Saturday, I visited the hill to check out conditions and talk to Chelsea about her experience in the racing program.

From the top of 119 Street, I followed an Edmonton Transit bus all the way down the hill. As part of a new ETS route serving the ski hill, buses leave from Southgate Shopping Center at half-hour intervals, beginning bright and early at 8:30 am.

**AT THE HILL**, conditions looked fantastic. Snow Valley has had a great start to the season, dampened only slightly by that nasty cold snap a few weeks ago. Given that it was a weekend, I had expected crowded slopes, but by 4 pm the midday rush was gone and the chairlift and t-bar lift lines had dwindled to a handful of people.

In addition to the t-bar and the chairlift, Snow Valley has two magic carpets for beginners. Up until last season, Snow Valley had just one carpet, on the bunny hill; the beginner terrain was serviced by a rope tow. Last season, the hill finally replaced it.

The second carpet is a welcome addition for many beginners; now, instead of being yanked out of their boots on the cruel rope tow, they can spend more time learning how to turn and

## SKI AREA

stop. That doesn't mean all the humour is gone though.

In its first season, the beginner area climbed a long, steep pitch, causing a occasional pile-up when beginners would lose balance on the steeper incline. This year, to remedy the problem, Snow Valley moved the lower part of the carpet to provide a gradual climb, but it can still be a bit of an amusement at times.

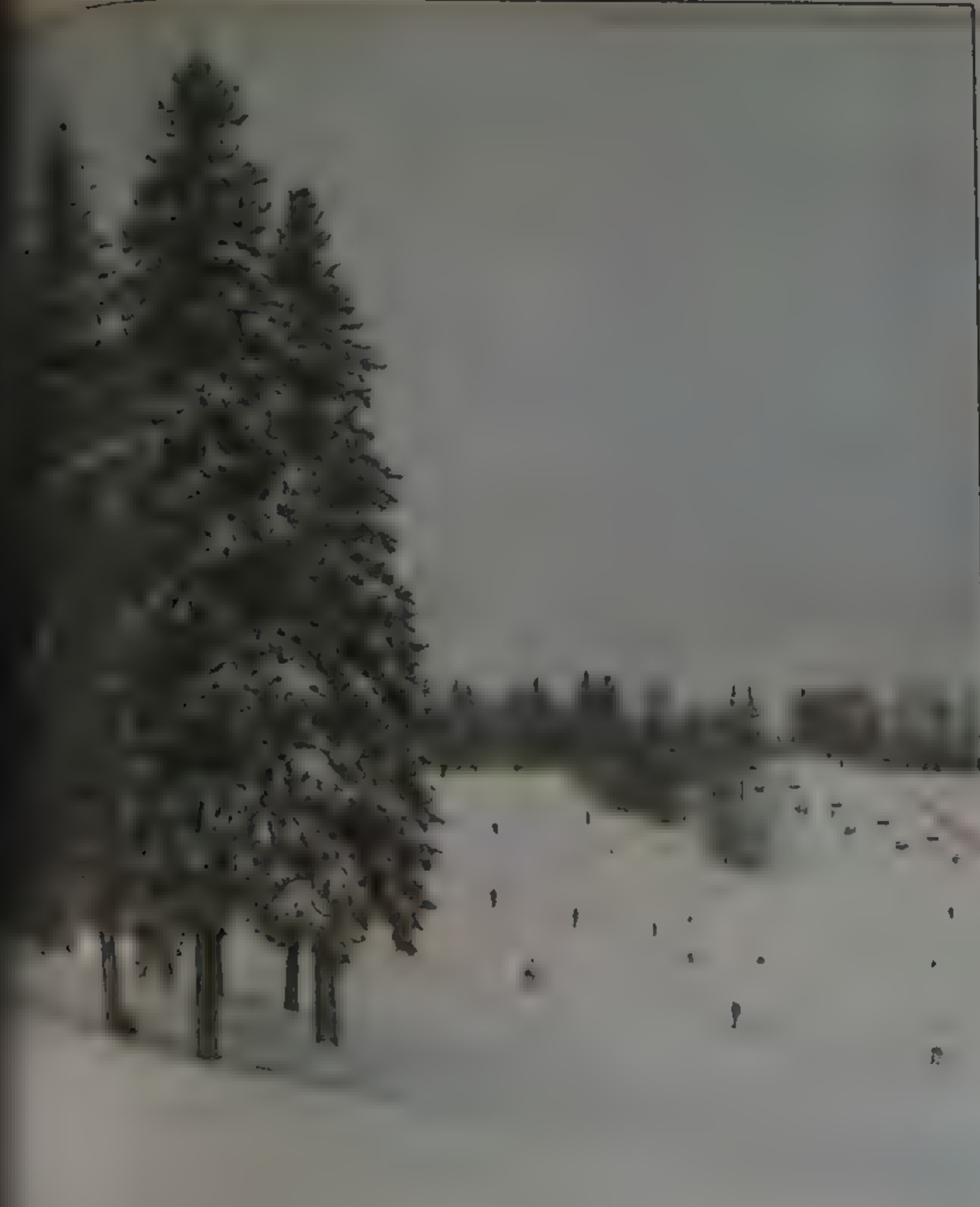
In the terrain park, crews have provided the basic necessities, including a couple jumps, a battleship rail, flat down rail, and a box. Helmets are mandatory in the park and ski patrol recommend a high quality well-fitted brain bucket, having witnessed a number of guys knocking themselves silly while attempting stunts still slightly out of their reach.

The rest of the slopes at the hill are relatively gentle pitches, great for practicing. You can even let loose and lay down some speed carving action as well. On the smaller size, Snow Valley provides a lot of fun on learning—they offer lessons for all ages and ability, as well as supporting programs.

The youngest racers on the hill start at the age of four or five, like Chelsea. Five-year-olds are placed in a program called the Dream Team, where they are introduced to race skills, have fun and learn to compete. From the age of six to ten, the kids train through the national Nancy Greene program. After age 11, things get a little more intense and the hours of training increase, although you can choose to just compete for fun. At age 11 and older, more serious programs are offered.

Chelsea is currently in the K2 mountain program.





Her week usually consists of training sessions at Snow Valley Tuesday and Thursday nights, and during the day. But there are weekends where she'll take off Thursday nights for some serious mountain training or racing. Last weekend she was at Nakiska, and this weekend she'll be competing against other Alberta racers at Rabbit

With the advanced programs, skiers can travel even further afield. This fall, Chelsea and several other members of the team flew to Tignes, France for some mountain training on the glacier. In addition to a fantastic training experience, the team enjoyed the thrill of racing and skiing with professional skiers from other national race teams, and trained alongside our Canadian

ing competitively means a busy schedule, but it doesn't seem to be much for Chelsea. She's living her life to become a professional racer and maybe even compete in the Olympics one day. She's still pretty young for Vancouver 2010, but it may be a long time after that we hear her name called to the starting gate. In addition to eating up time, skiing can be costly. Joining the Racers Club is only \$200 to \$500, but if you select the mountain program,

costs pile up dramatically. Every race and/or training session adds another \$200 to \$500. Chelsea's parents estimate this year will total about \$10,000, and that doesn't include any of the travel and accommodations for themselves when they accompany her to the mountains. This program is not limited to just skiers; snowboarders can take part in similar training events both at Snow Valley and mountain resorts like Big White and Nakiska, as well.

**OF COURSE, SNOW VALLEY** offers cheaper alternatives for the less ambitious as well. This year, they are continuing their cheap night-skiing promotion. From 7 to 9 pm on weeknights and 5 pm on Fridays, lift tickets are only \$7. If you don't have your own gear you can rent it; it's an additional \$7 for ski stuff or \$14 for boarding.

Another perk is Snow Valley's deluxe lodge. It's big and has a great fireplace where you can kick back and relax between runs. The lower level houses the Snow Rider ski shop where I was impressed to find all kinds of ski and snowboard packages at pretty low prices. It's not the Rockies, but for \$21 or less you can get in a lot of turns, and the snow is great.

Plus, you never know when the next Edi Podivinsky might whip by. ▼



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## To sled or not to sled, that is the question

COLIN CATHREA / colin@newsworld.com

Just a year ago, I thought my decision was firm. I was going to toss away my environmental beliefs and buy a snowmobile. I wanted that unbridled two-stroke machine to take me way back into the alpine and give me endless acres of pure powder. To hell with the granola eating pine-coners. If I wanted to blow blue smoke all over the mountainside, I would blame it on the Canadian parks system.

That's right, Parks Canada was driving me over the edge. They had either stopped or retarded development of every ski area in Jasper and Banff for decades. Last year, after another early season trip up to Jasper, I was fed up. No snowmaking allowed here! It might stop the migration of the subterranean rock worm or add more water to one side of the valley, upsetting the natural balance of watershed.

But now, Marmot Basin has snowmaking and what a tremendous difference it has already made. Once again, I'm back to agonizing over the decision: great, lift-assisted skiing in Jasper, with a better early season base than the hill has had in years, or the guilty pleasures of backcountry pow on the back of a smoke-belching sled?

I decided it was time to do my homework, and see what these sleds are all about. As I'd expected, they are among the most air-polluting machines an individual can own. It's not a cheap past time either. After

## SKI OPINION

investing a few thousand in your sled, you'll probably want a big-assed turbo diesel ultra quad cab to pull your 70-foot long trailer. Once you're in the bush, you'll burn a mere few thousand litres of fuel as you rip up ecologically sensitive moss and lichens to get a big face full of powder.

Sleds also make a ton of noise. The higher-end rockets have had their exhaust systems and mufflers removed to keep them light. And there are plenty of people worried by snowmobiles, for more reasons than just their 80-decibel flatulence: they pollute worse than cars, they stress wildlife, and their compacted trails may give predators an advantage over prey.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there are hundreds of square kilometres of unpoached lines up there, and I don't need to worry about the high-end ski attire. A greasy pair of insulated coveralls and a Cat toque will do just fine.

This is the attitude shared by a new breed of backcountry access freaks. They're the ones that have done the homework and believe there is a right and a wrong way to do this. The advantage, as they see it, is the ability to go further and further back into the mountains to be on their own. Logging roads and mining access trails give you a way to get elevation well

above the tree line. Once you're up there, the terrain seems endless. You can go up into the mountains and see another person all day. My friends of mine down here have spent the last few summers building a log shack in the backcountry and now have a lodge and ski area on 200 acres. Their lift ticket is a five-litre can of gas.

However, there are a few issues that need to be addressed. Number one is avalanches. You need to know what you're doing and whether it's relatively safe or your life could be short.

These machines have more engines than you have skis and trails. They can climb above light fluffy snow with the horsepower to climb steep slopes quickly. You can watch this at the new movies introduced at the Whistler Film Festival this year: *Two Stroke*, *Roops of Hazara* show motocross tricks and backcountry skiing.

Just think, a 100-km per hour lift to the best pow lines in the Rockies. Cooking hotdogs on the sled. Sippin' beer at 25 km per hour. One around anywhere. The throttle across open slopes at 100 km per hour.

But alas, with my environmental background and my appreciation for the natural serenity of the Rockies, just can't justify getting into these habits die hard I guess.



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# It's best to snow your limits

by CATHERINE / colin@vancouverweekly.com

It's been said that the Inuit people have hundreds of names for snow. Maybe it's because there's not a whole lot else to talk about on those long winter nights, or maybe it's because there are so many different

types. Not to be outdone, we non-Eskimo have come up with our own list of pet names for the white gold that we play on every winter and spring. The names describe the type, consistency and texture of snow. The descriptions can include geographical reference like "Sierra Sludge" or "Utah light" and can also have some telltale signs of how we try to ski it.

Snow comes in three basic categories: light, medium and heavy. Each of these can have sub-categories that further break down the description. For instance, you can have a relatively light corn snow with a wind blown layer, or a thick wet heavy snow with a ice base. How we ski each of these conditions depends on factors like speed, turn radius and body positions. Before you throw your hands up in data overload defeat, I need to say that like all sports, it breaks down to finding what works. Heavy snow requires more work. Light snow a bit more patience. I'm going to break down the techniques for four types of "difficult" snows: crud, windblown, corn and spring



## THE CONDITIONS

### CRUD

You have likely all arrived at a ski area several days after a huge dump. That in itself is a bit of a piss-off, because we can only imagine how

great it was just a few days earlier, but when we start making our first turns and the snow seems to be grabbing our skis and boots and wanting to toss us on our ass, well that's just cruddy. Settled powder snow is crud. What was once a light 50 cm is now a heavy 20cm.

Couple this with a myriad of old tracks criss-crossing the hill and it can make for a tough run. This is

when our core strength training comes in handy. These conditions will toss your body weight forward and back with ferocity. The skis will slow dramatically then release, sending you sitting back. It's easy to tense up your entire body, which makes bending your knees for a good un-weighting action more difficult.

Contrary to your better judgment, a bit more speed can help under these circumstances. It can elevate your skis out of the snow slightly, making them easier to turn. As in all "heavier" conditions, a more pronounced un-weighting action is a necessity. Crashes rarely produce injuries, but equipment can be dispersed for several square metres and make for great video.

### WINDBLOWN: NOT JUST A HAIRSTYLE

This is a result of snowfall accompanied by high winds. The wind often

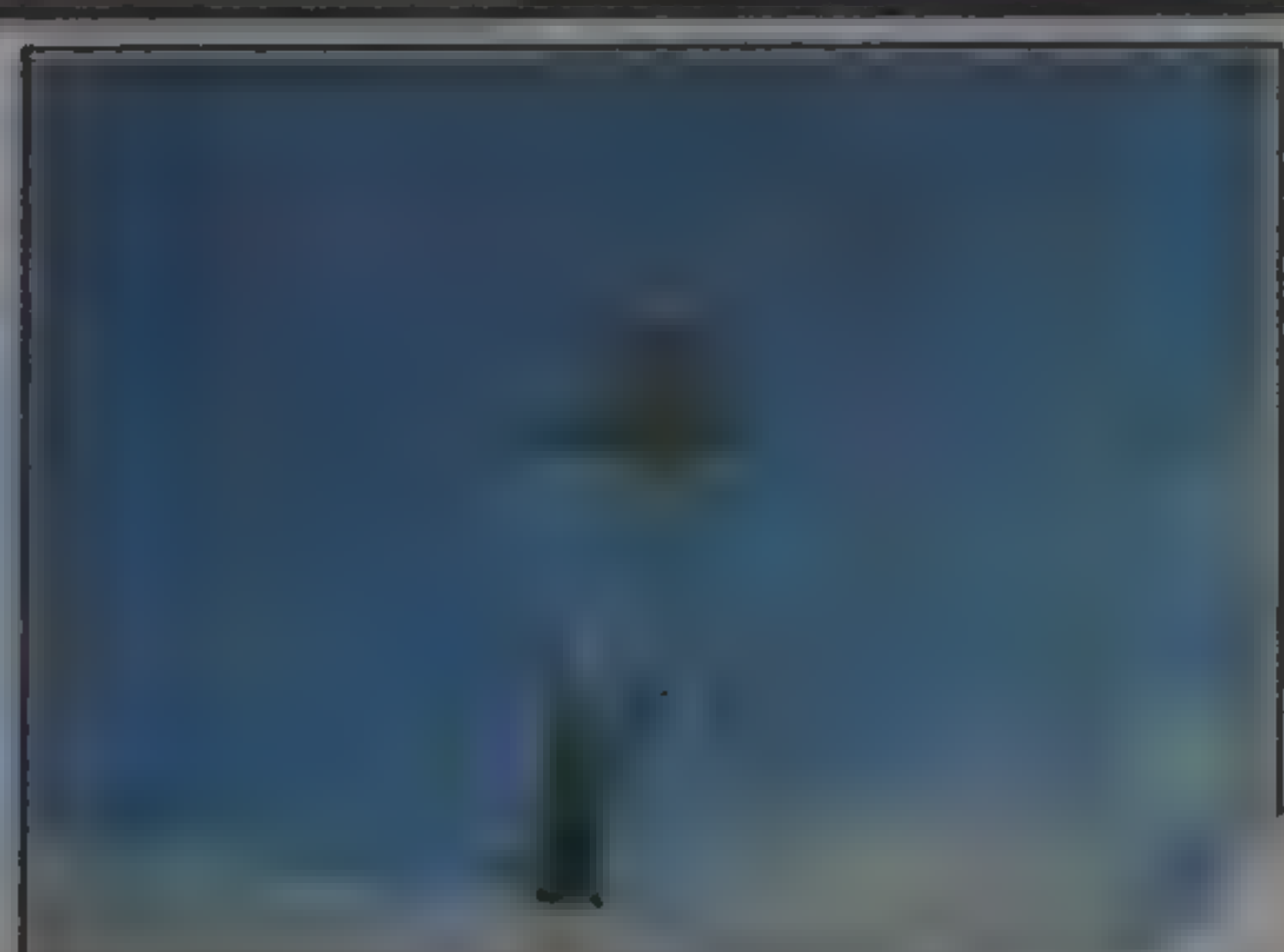
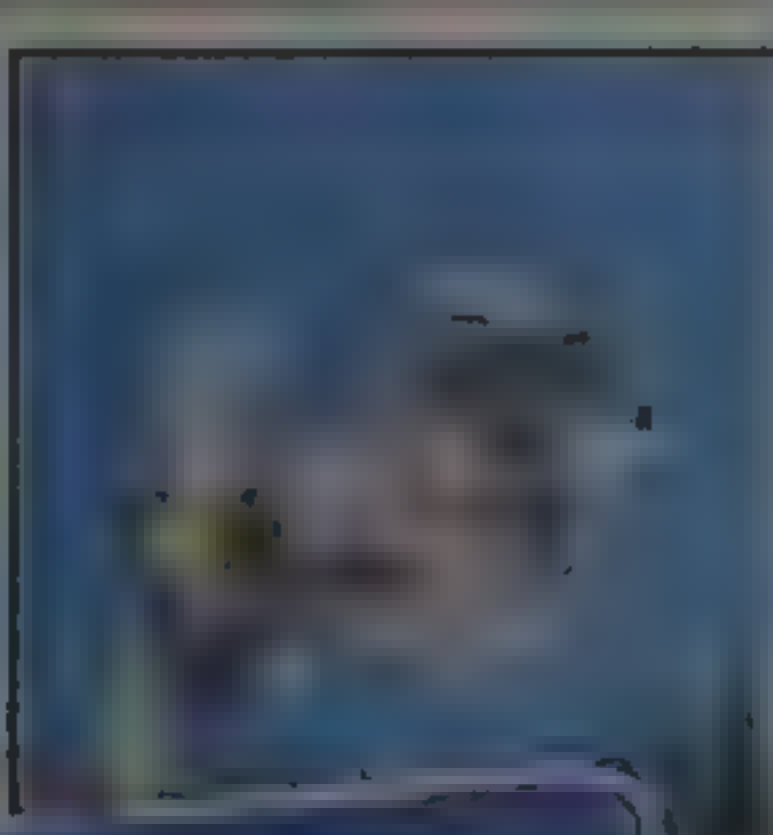
breaks up the snowflakes and packs them into a more compressed layer. The snow underneath is protected and can remain relatively light, which can compound the turning of the skis. When the crust layer becomes strong enough, skiers can ride on top of the layer.

If you find yourself gliding on top of windblown snow, go slow. Try to test the stability of the crust, keeping in mind that this stability can change as you move down the mountain. The worst is when you have a crust that keeps breaking below your skis. This is when it's a good idea to traverse, stop, do a kick turn and traverse again. You may have to work your way down the entire pitch this way. I have taken my skis off and walked down entire sections with these con-

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

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# Ski cross clears another hurdle towards 2010

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vueweekly.com

The International Olympic Committee's Executive Board has given provisional acceptance to ski cross at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, pending agreement from the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee.

As long as the Organizing Committee agrees, racing fans will get to see the double-plank version of boardercross in 2010.

The first official ski cross event was held at the 1997 Winter X Games in Big Bear Lake, California. Like boardercross, ski cross involves heats of four skiers racing down the course together. Along the way, they encounter hairpin turns, moguls, bumps and rollers as they race to the finish line. The first two across the

## OLYMPICS

finish line qualify, the last two are eliminated. The heats continue until there are only four skiers left. The winners are decided in a final race.

At Vue, we welcome the new sport—it will bring some interesting colour to Olympic events. Ski events are gaining in popularity again, but this will catapult them into a new realm.

After all, one of the most talked-about moments of the last Olympics (aside from Jenn Heil's gold) was Lindsey Jacobellis's method air that lost her the boardercross. Love her or hate her for the move, that's the kind of controversy that makes writers' lives easy. Bring on the ski cross. ▼

## SNOW CONDITIONS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ditions. When you fall, the crust can cut your skin. So to avoid looking like a survivor of a slasher flick, be careful.

On the other side of the coin, one of the most joyous conditions I have ever encountered can occur in the spring when the crust goes through a freeze-thaw cycle and remains intact. I call it "Tabletop" and it's an incredible experience. Think of the most perfectly groomed run ever. An ultra smooth layer of snow that has just begun to soften under the spring sun. A layer of crust thick enough you will not break through, but soft enough to carve beautiful turns in. This is one of the ultimate snow conditions you can encounter.

## CORN, YOU COPE WITH IT

Corn snow is a unique condition that occurs when snowflakes partially melt and then re-freeze. This tem-

perature cycle rounds the flakes into more spherical shapes and corn snow is born. It feels like millions of ball bearings below your skis. This is another "patience snow" that requires a slowing of movements, and more un-weighting action. It can be challenging but a whole lot of fun at the same time.

## SPRING IN YOUR STEP

When the weather cycles between freeze and thaw, the snow goes through a cycle of slush to ice. When I go spring skiing, I don't get to the hill for the first run. The snow is usually hard as rock, and the intense vibrations skiing creates makes my dental fillings feel like they're being dislodged from my mouth.

However, there is that perfect time of the day when the snow begins to soften and groomed skating rinks become beautiful carpets of carving heaven. My recommendation: ski your butt off during this time of day. Stop for food later.

What I'm going to tell you now is

really important. This is the part you need to remember. When the snow gets really heavy at the end of the day and you are tired, be careful. Slowing down will not keep you from harm's way. This is when more injuries occur than any other time of the ski season. Tired skiers and heavy wet snow make for slow twisting falls that injure tendons, ligaments and bones.

Now don't get me wrong here. I love to blow apart soft slushy bumps and carve six-inch divots into the slurpie hills even more than the next guy. It's when you let your guard down and you're putzing along that an unexpected blog of snow can toss you down. Be aware you are tiring and quit while the quitin' is good.

Don't let bad snow conditions ruin your day. If you change your skiing technique to meet the snow, you can have a great day. Remember that the conditions can change dramatically within that day. From ice to slush, or powder to crust, you can tame them all. ▼

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# Adventures in accommodation, from four-star to no-star

ADAM SMITH / smith@vuwweekly.com

Like all things, the road is often what you make of it. Life on the road can be a filthy mess of day-old bologna sandwiches and getting by on as little as possible. It can be milk and beer leaking together in a cooler; it can be cleaning up this mess ... or drinking the spoils.

It can also be a day of riding followed by a massage and a glass of merlot, a fine dinner and a soak in the hot tub, soothing your muscles under a steamy, star-filled sky. Both are romantic, and both are respectable. The mountain-bound traveller's fate depends primarily on budget and state of mind.

My experiences of life on the snowboarding road have roots in impoverished drunken revelry, and in the beautiful landscapes of Western Canada. Sleeping in hurting cars and crashing on floors, sometimes at a comfortable rich kid's parents' condo or cabin, and sometimes in the back of a truck at the hill. The journey is always worth it: a day of fresh powder or just observing the serene landscapes morphing through generations as you pass by towering figures of rock and moss.

Off the mountain, ski communities offer trendy coffee shops, delicious organic bakeries and the old-fashioned main drags of quiet shops and bustling diners, with all sorts of characters roaming around at all times of year. Resort accommodations in the western Rockies are traditionally on the pricey side, but you often get what you pay for.

**THE COPPER HORSE LODGE** at Kicking Horse, for example, is a modern spectacle, a locally owned, high-end lodge with exceptional service, fine dining, and a ski-in, ski-out location. It boasts

## SKS | ACCOMMODATIONS

some of the comforts that standard accommodations wholly overlook. None of those harsh, nasty French milled soaps that, like the Gideon's touch, are so common in the hotels of North America—the Copper Horse Lodge provides a selection of pleasant, organic body washes for use in the grand shower, which features a sitting room and soothing massage jets. It's not the soap, but the attention to detail that makes it excel. A high-end choice on an amazing mountain—book ahead. Upper-end places often ring in at over \$200 per night, a rich but pleasant stay if you think you're worth it.

On the other side of the spectrum there are the blasphemous, unfit-for-human-habitation rooms at Powder King in BC, an outback powder haven north of Prince George. These places need a Capital Health Order. Chateau Atco is a bizarre network of Atco trailers. The set price is \$20 a night, but in reality the place runs on a strange system of nominal, pay-what-you-think-its-really-worth kind of thing, because there are little or no staff present. It is composed of basic, ruinous rooms in the filthy but heated trailers at the base of the occult Powder King.

Due to the change of ownership at

Powder King, I think the future of Chateau Atco could be in peril, so check it out while you can if you're into that kind of thing. And if you get tired of slumming it, PK also offers a wide range of more than suitable accommodation at the base of the mountain as well. Like I said, it's what you make of it.

An often overlooked option on the powder trail is the hostel scene. For \$22 a night you'll get a bed at almost any mountain town around. The benefits to this being a friendly, bustling atmosphere and the opportunity to meet a variety of folks from all over the world; the downside is the cramped space, non-existent privacy and communal body odour. These places are always booked, especially if you're broke and in need, so definitely book a place ahead of time, especially when it's snowing.

In the midrange, there is exceptional choice available everywhere, but some advice for the thrifty rider: use coupons. They are everywhere. It's not like getting a free Big Mac, you can often save enough money to stay extra days or at least go home with something significant left in your wallet, maybe even enough that you can toss that stale bologna sandwich and treat yourself to a nice dinner. ▼

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Rabbit Hill — 60cm base, 10cm of new snow in the past 7 days, all lifts and runs open  
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Sunridge — 60cm base, no new snow in the past 7 days, 6 lifts and 13 runs open

### Alberta

Sunshine — 106cm base, 14cm of snow in the past 2 days, 11 lifts and 91 runs open  
Lake Louise — 87-135cm base, 10cm of snow in the past 7 days, all lifts/130 runs open  
C.O.P. — 75cm base, no new snow in the past 7 days  
Fortress — Opening date TBA  
Marmot Basin — 72cm base, 5cm of new snow in the past 7 days, all lifts open  
Nakiska — 30-67cm base, 9cm of new snow in the past 2 days, 4/6 lifts and 17/28 runs open  
Mt. Norquay — 65cm base, 7cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 5 lifts and 85% terrain open  
Castle Mt. — 45-140cm base, 6cm of new snow in past 2 days, opens full time Dec. 15  
Tawatinaw — 4cm of new snow, good conditions, open 10 — 4:30

### B.C.

Silver Star — 85-123cm base, 28cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 11/12 lifts and 95/117 runs open  
Big White — 117cm base, 19cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 6/16 lifts and 40/118 runs open  
Apex — 104cm base, 10cm of new snow in the past 2 hours, 4 lifts and 35 runs open  
Sun Peaks — 109cm base, 27cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 10/12 lifts and 115/121 runs open  
Femie — 137cm base, 14cm of new snow in the past 2 days, 9/10 lifts open and most terrain accessible  
Kimberley — 72cm base, opens Dec. 16  
Panorama — 37-84 cm base, 11cm of new snow in the past 2 days, 7/9 lifts and 40+ runs open  
Fairmont — Opens Dec. 15  
Kicking Horse — 147cm base, 23cm of new snow in the past 2 days, opens full time Dec. 15  
Red Mt. — 145cm base, 30cm of new snow in the past 2 days, 4/6 lifts open  
Whitewater — 205cm base, 30cm of new snow in the past 3 days, 3 lifts and 6 runs open  
Powder Springs — 54cm base, opens Dec. 16  
Mt. Washington — 220cm base, 80cm of new snow in the past 2 days, 1 lift and 1 run open  
Powder King — 180cm base, 20cm of new snow in the past 3 days  
Whistler/Blackcomb — 192cm base, 66cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 11 lifts and 61 runs open

### U.S.A.

Big Mt. — 92cm base, 11cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 4 lifts and 41 runs open  
49 North — 120-180cm base, 8cm of new snow in the past 3 days, 68 runs open  
Mt. Spokane — 97-147cm base, 10cm of new snow in the past 2 days, 4/5 lifts and 42/44 runs open  
Big Sky — 50-75cm base, trace amounts of snow in the past 2 days, 4 lifts and 23 runs open  
Schweitzer Mt. — 98cm base, 30cm of new snow in the past 7 days, 6 lifts and 31 runs open  
Lookout Pass — 135cm base, 38cm of new snow in the past 2 days, all lifts and runs open  
Silver Mt. Resort — 125cm base, 23cm of snow in past 2 days, lifts and runs closed, snowshoe trails open  
Crystal Mt. — 80cm base, no new snow, 5 lifts and 15/45 runs open  
Great Divide — 30cm base, no new snow, open Friday, Saturday and Sunday  
Sun Valley — 43cm base, no new snow in the past 3 days, 4 lifts and 45 runs open

All conditions accurate as of Dec. 13, 2006

## Ski on; you crazy diamond

HART GOLBECK / hart@vueweekly.com

Edmonton-based Magic Bus tours and Marmot Basin are joining forces for several week-ends of extreme skiing.

Dubbed the Crushed Diamonds Extreme Ski camp, this full package deal is for advanced and expert skiers who are ready for some World Cup coaching on monster steeps.

The packages are currently on sale for \$469 and they include bus, hotel, two days of lifts, four hours of coaching per day, video review, lunch and après ski fun. These extreme camps are scheduled for the first weekend of every month starting on Jan 6.

In order to maintain a good

## SKI | EXTREME

coach/skier ratio, space is limited. Book early so that you won't be disappointed. Magic Bus tours have been around since 1999 and they offer an affordable weekend ride to Marmot Basin from Edmonton's Ramada Inn on Kingsway Avenue. Fridays through Sundays and on holidays, the bus leaves Edmonton at 5:30 am and arrives at the slopes at 9:45 am. A same-day return coach leaves at 4:30 pm, arriving back into town by 9 pm. Total cost depends on age; check their web at [www.magicbus.ca](http://www.magicbus.ca) for prices. ▽

## Balance depends on good pole position

MONS | SKI TIPS  
COLIN CATHREA  
colin@vueweekly.com

One thing I really like about skiing over snowboarding is that you are so much more mobile. When you come to a flat section you can skate and pole across the snow to keep your momentum.

But this is not the primary reason for having ski poles. They are a timing mechanism to set up each and every turn. I can tell the difference immediately when I don't have my poles strapped on. I kind of feel like a duck out of water—unbalanced and uncomfortable. This feeling shows us that the pole plant is a very important part of turning effectively. So what is the proper technique for a plant?

The term "pole plant" leads us to think the pole tip must be firmly jabbed into the ground—not so! As your pole swing ends, the pole touch should be just that—a touch, occurring around the time

your skis are moving into the new turn. A strong touch becomes a "plant" for bumps or heavy snow. It may occur a little earlier in the turn to help stabilize your upper body, but don't let your hand (upper body) get driven backwards. It must remain up and forward. Moving smoothly down most slopes, the pole touch is a signal that you've completed a turn in balance and are moving into a new turn. Think of the touch as your indicator of balance—eyes and hands up, skis rolling across the bases to the new edges, and the pole tip smoothly engaging the snow.

Skiing is a connection of fluid body movements that all combine to allow you to flow from turn to turn. Any major change in your balance points throws the whole process off, and you can't call a nice smooth turn. Skiing past your pole plant is a very common problem I see the time. Touch and release, get everything in position, just like a waiter carrying a tray of Dom P. And after a set of cool linked turns, tip back a glass to job well done. ▽

## Lodge builds legend of a wall

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vueweekly.com

Frontier Lodge has opened one of the largest man-made ice climbing walls in Canada. The wall is over 15 metres (50 feet) tall with more than 220 square metres of climbable ice, and can accommodate up to four different climbers at a time on its two double-sided faces.

While the Lodge has had ice walls for over 10 years, the new ice wall offers a whole new level for climbing enthusiasts. As director Chuck Bourn explains, the Lodge's new wall coincides with increasing interest in the sport.

For its part, Frontier Lodge has been introducing people to ice climb-

## SKI | CLIMBING

ing for years. They offer weekend courses for beginner and intermediate climbers. Participants start with training on the ice walls, and then progress to climbing natural ice on one of the many waterfalls in the nearby area.

The Lodge, located one hour west of Rocky Mountain House, operates a non-profit wilderness adventure camp. With its 47-year-history, it has been known to some Vue readers as the annual summer mountain biking event, the Fat Tire Festival. ▽

## LOOK TO

# SNOW ZONE

IN VUEWEEKLY

IN THE  
COMING WEEKS

# CASTLE MTN & POWDER KING



# Get on the Sol train for Monashees powder

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vueweekly.com

Most people who've never heli-skied assume that it's too rich for them, or beyond their ability. Sometimes, these assumptions are correct. But not all the time.

Sol Mountain Touring, operating in the Monashees range in Interior BC, is offering some incredible deals between now and the end of December. If you're thinking of a three- or four-day trip and lift lines aren't your thing, heli might just be for you. Do the math: lift tickets and accommodations over several days can easily add up to several hundred dollars or more. Sol is offering a base package (four nights, self-guided and self-catered) for only \$465; seven days goes from \$595. For the day-tripper, guided tours start from \$65 per day. (All prices are before GST.) To get the discounted rates, you have to book to ski before Dec 30.

With a guided tour, Sol will tailor

## SKI | HELI

the trip to suit your ability, so there's no need to be intimidated. If you're more advanced, you may be ready to go self-guided, but you better know your stuff. Smart backcountry skiers know their limitations—like the expertise to judge the safety of snow conditions. One step towards building this expertise is to take an RAC (recreational avalanche course) through Sol.

No matter which option you choose, you can expect some great riding. As co-owner and lead guide Aaron Cooper recalls, "Last year, we had four separate weeks where we received two metres of snow inside a seven-day period. That's almost a foot of snow each night."

Time to start planting hints about what you're wishing for in your stocking. ▽

# Get the tickets to ride

HART GOLBECK / hart@vueweekly.com

So here I am checking out my local Costco store, looking for some interesting Christmas gifts and I run smackdab into a display selling lift tickets and packages to BC Mountain Resorts.

The Silver Star/Big White combo pack advertises a "Ticket To Ride" special of two lift tickets at either resort for \$35. Sun Peaks has a similar deal selling at Costco too, but at their destination only. There was a Whistler package as well but it appeared to be at golf only.

## SKI | SAVINGS

This is definitely a new marketing strategy and it is quite a big savings if you intend to get to either Big White or Silver Star, where a single daypass goes for up to \$65. The selling store probably gets a sizeable cut as well so the hill is probably only recovering 40 to 50 per cent of the original cost. For boarders and skiers who are certain to go, it's definitely a deal worth checking out. ▽

# Ride from rail to rail on Jasper Snow Train

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vueweekly.com

This season, Marmot Basin, the Town of Jasper and VIA Rail are teaming up to redefine "the rails" in the ski industry—it doesn't involve a terrain park. Instead, it's about luxury and ease. From Jan 12 to Apr 22, 2007, VIA Rail will run a weekend service from Edmonton to Jasper, leaving Friday night and returning Sunday night. Other schedules will run throughout the week as well.)

The domed Snow Train cars will give travellers panoramic views of the mountains, and one less thing to worry about on their weekend trip. A one-way fare, with meal, is \$123 for

## SKI | TRAVEL

adults, with discounts for seniors, students and children.

Local tour providers are getting on board as well. Magic Bus Tours Ltd is offering "The Weekender" package, which covers transportation, accommodation and lift tickets for \$445 per person, based on double occupancy.

More information on Magic Bus packages is available through [www.magicbus.ca](http://www.magicbus.ca). To book through VIA, check out [www.viarail.ca](http://www.viarail.ca) for more details or call 1-888-VIA-RAIL. ▽

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QUESTION:

WHAT ARE THE MOUNTAINS AND SKI AREAS THAT ARE ADVERTISED IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE?

# F&S

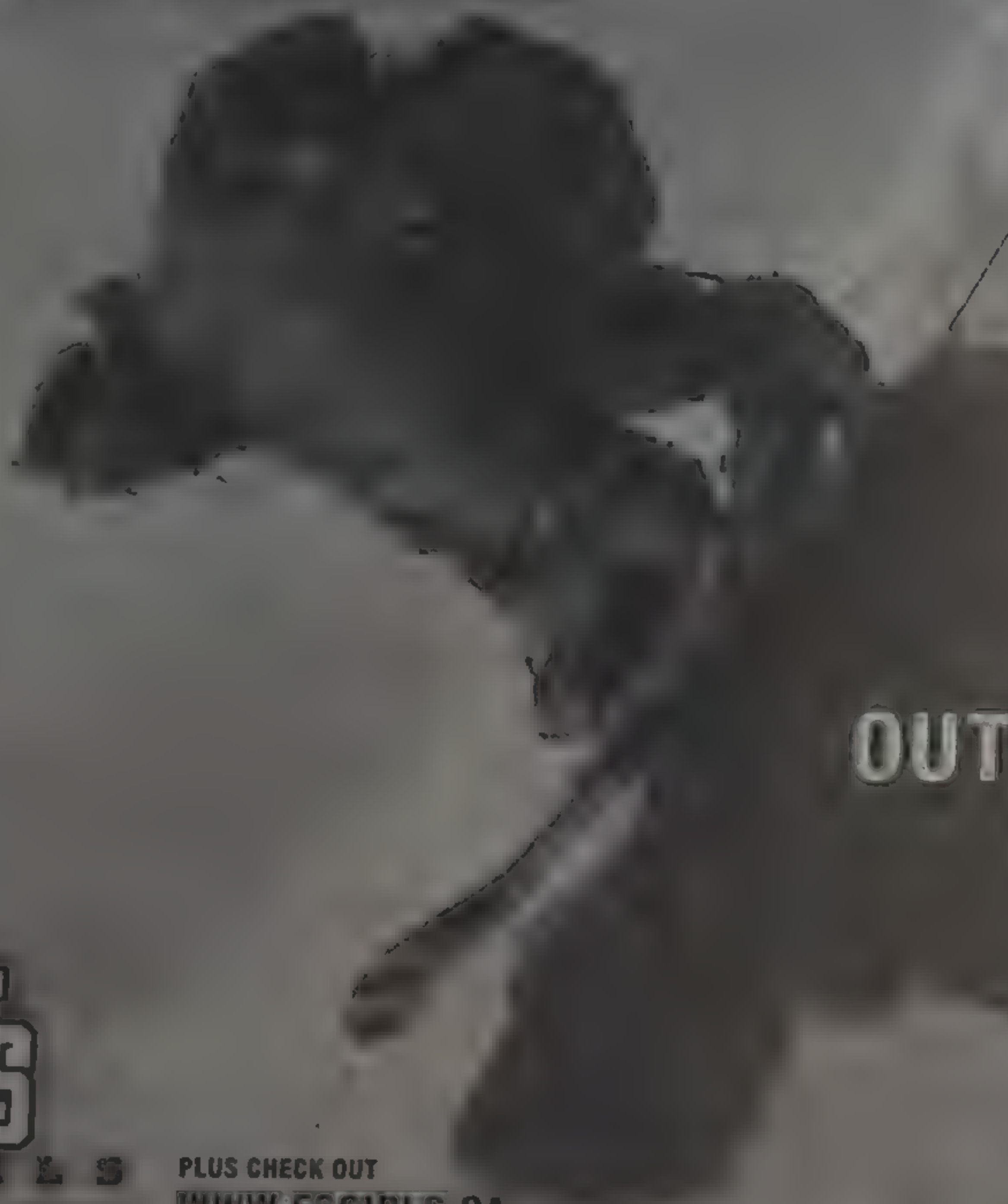
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# F&S

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# TOP 30 Megatunes

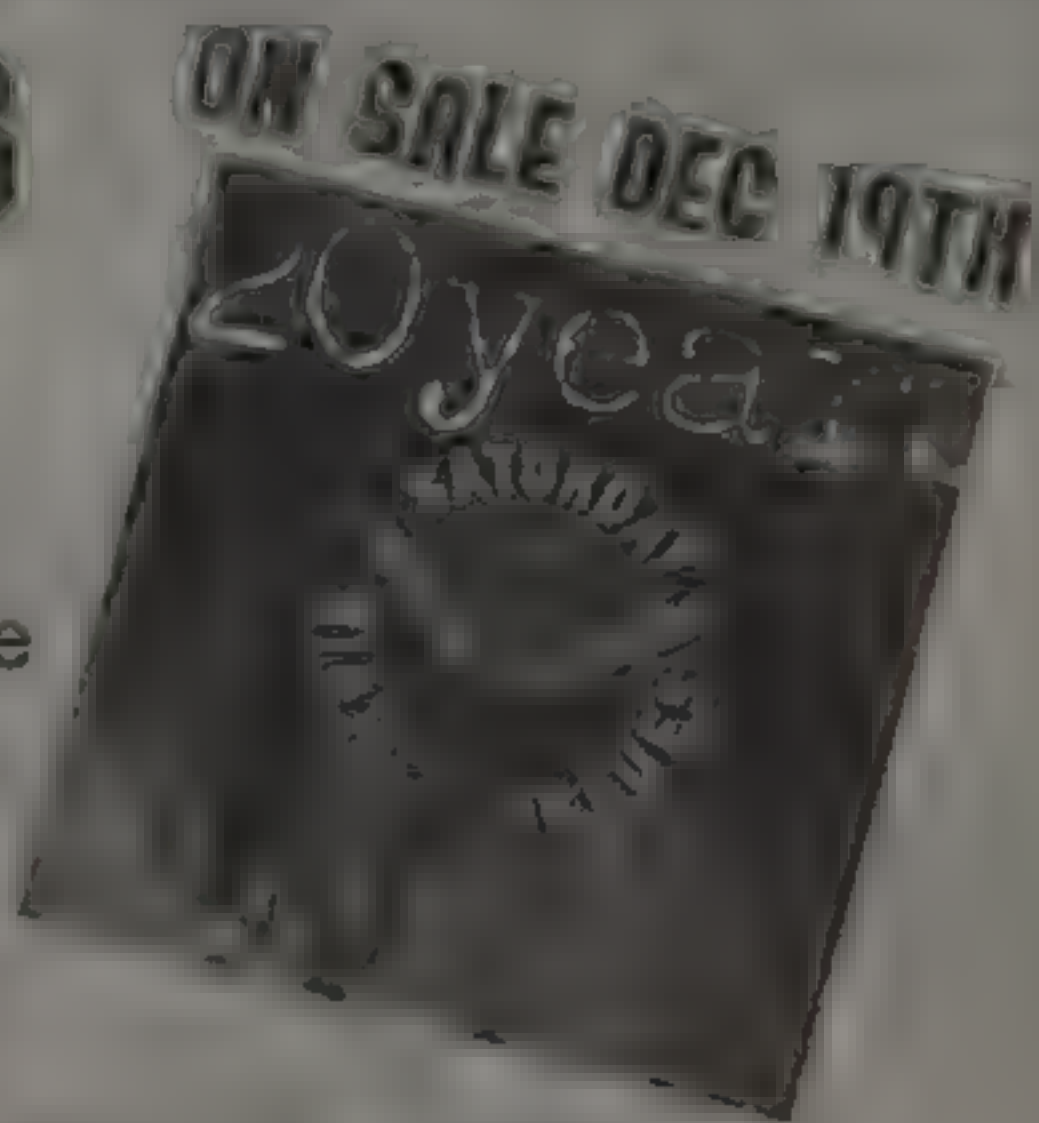
Your Music Destination

FOR THE WEEK ENDING DEC 7, 2006

1. Tom Waits - Orphans (anti)
2. JJ Cale & Eric Clapton - The Road To Escondido (reprise)
3. Bob Dylan - Modern Times (columbia)
4. Joanna Newsom - Ys (drag city)
5. The Be Good Tanyas - Hello Love (network)
6. Yusuf - Another Cup (atlantic)
7. AA Soundsystem - Laissez Faire (saved by radio)
8. Midlake - The Trials Of Van Occupanther (worlds fair)
9. The Decemberists - The Crane Wife (capitol)
10. Mark Knopfler & Emmylou Harris - All The Roadrunning (mercury)
11. TV On The Radio - Return To Cookie Mountain (interscope)
12. Beck - The Information (interscope)
13. Mastodon - Blood Mountain (relapse)
14. Chad VanGalen - Skelliconnection (flemish eye)
15. Greg Keelor - Aphrodite Rose (warner)
16. Jim Cuddy - The Light That Guides You Home (warner)
17. The Cape May - Glass Mountain Roads (flemisheye)
18. Isis - The Absence Of Truth (ipercac)
19. Various - Sorrow Bound: Hanks Williams Re-Examined (ruby moon)
20. Ratatat - Classics (xl)
21. Red Ram - Stars Ablaze (red ram)
22. Blackie And The Rodeo Kings - Lets Frolic (true north)
23. Fractal Pattern - Absent From But Entirely Within... (fp records)
24. Madeleine Peyroux - Half The Perfect World (rounder)
25. And One - Bodypop (metropolis)
26. James Hunter - People Gonna Talk (rounder)
27. The McDades - Bloom (free radio)
28. Damien Rice - 9 (warner)
29. Shout Out Out Out Out - Not Saying Just Saying (nrm's wcm)
30. Wendy McNeill - The Wonder Show (determine)

## VARIOUS ARTISTS SATURDAY NIGHT BLUES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate twenty years on the air, CBC Records and Saturday Night Blues release this two CD set of music recorded for the show. Gathered from years of concert material, the goal was to represent artists, whether they are internationally known, or local heroes keeping the blues alive.



10355 Whyte Ave. Shop online at megatunes.com 434-6342



## It takes a lot to pack a halfpipe

HART GOLBECK / hart@vueweekly.com

Sunshine Village opened their terrain park last weekend. Sprawled over eight acres, it is definitely going to be another seasonal highlight for boarders and skiers looking for big air and grinding adventure.

The initial weekend showcased seven boxes, seven rails and three jumps. This is only the beginning and terrain park supervisor Tim Hyndman is promising that new features will be added weekly as demand and interest grows.

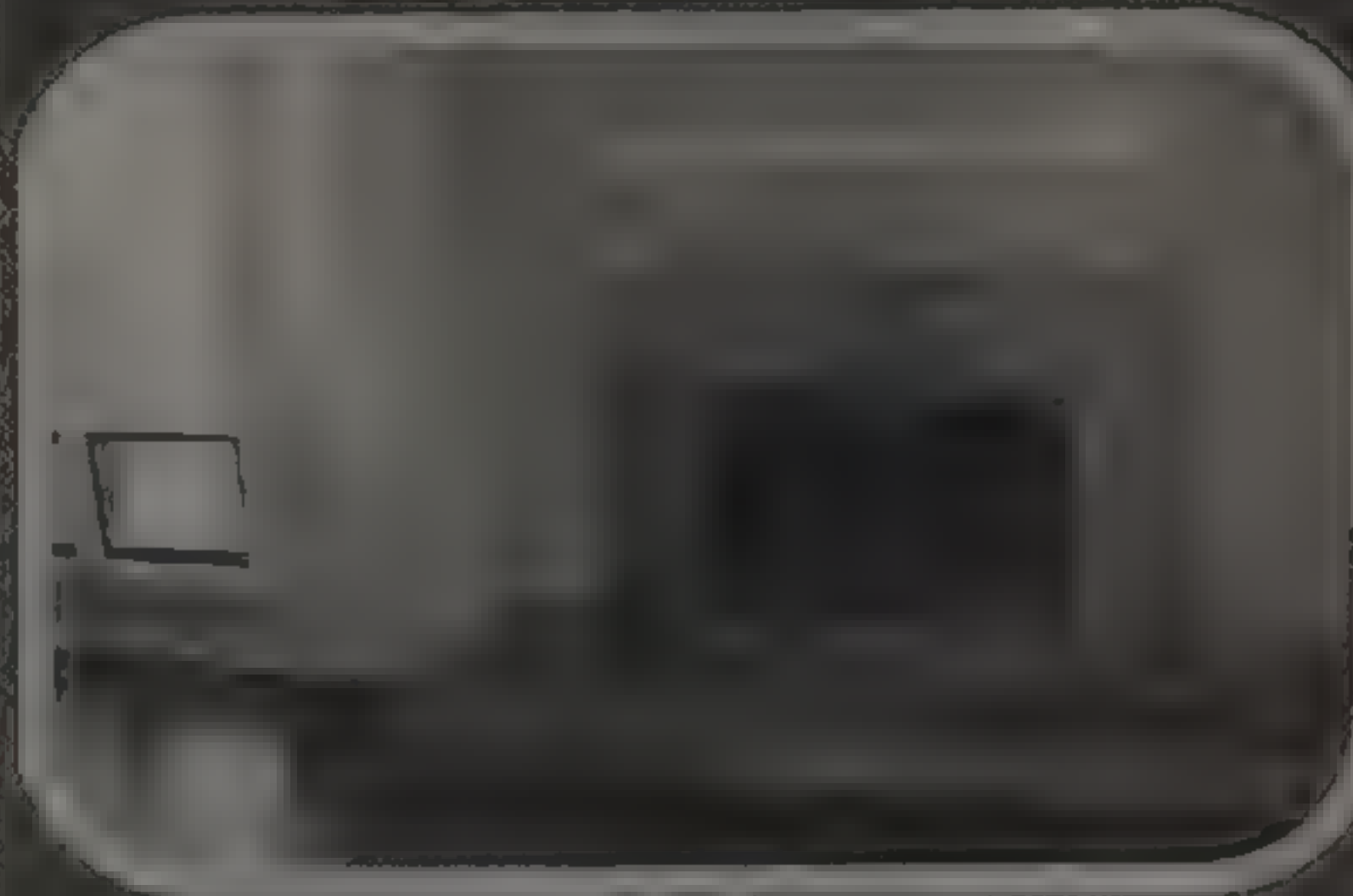
Four guys dubbed "park monkeys" will shape, carve and maintain the features throughout the season. That's a big plus because the hits and rails need continuous upkeep as rid-

## PARK JIBBING

ers and boarders destroy the takeoff and landing areas. Last year there was a "Butter Box" and "Wall Ride" you can expect to see them soon.

There's no word on halfpipe opening just yet, but that's usually the last to appear because it takes so much snow. Sunshine is not big on snowmaking so they wait for enough of the natural stuff to drop before they push and shape it into place. The best way to access the terrain park is via Angel and head over to the Divide chair. When open the halfpipe will be under the Standish lift. ▼

## Apartment for rent!



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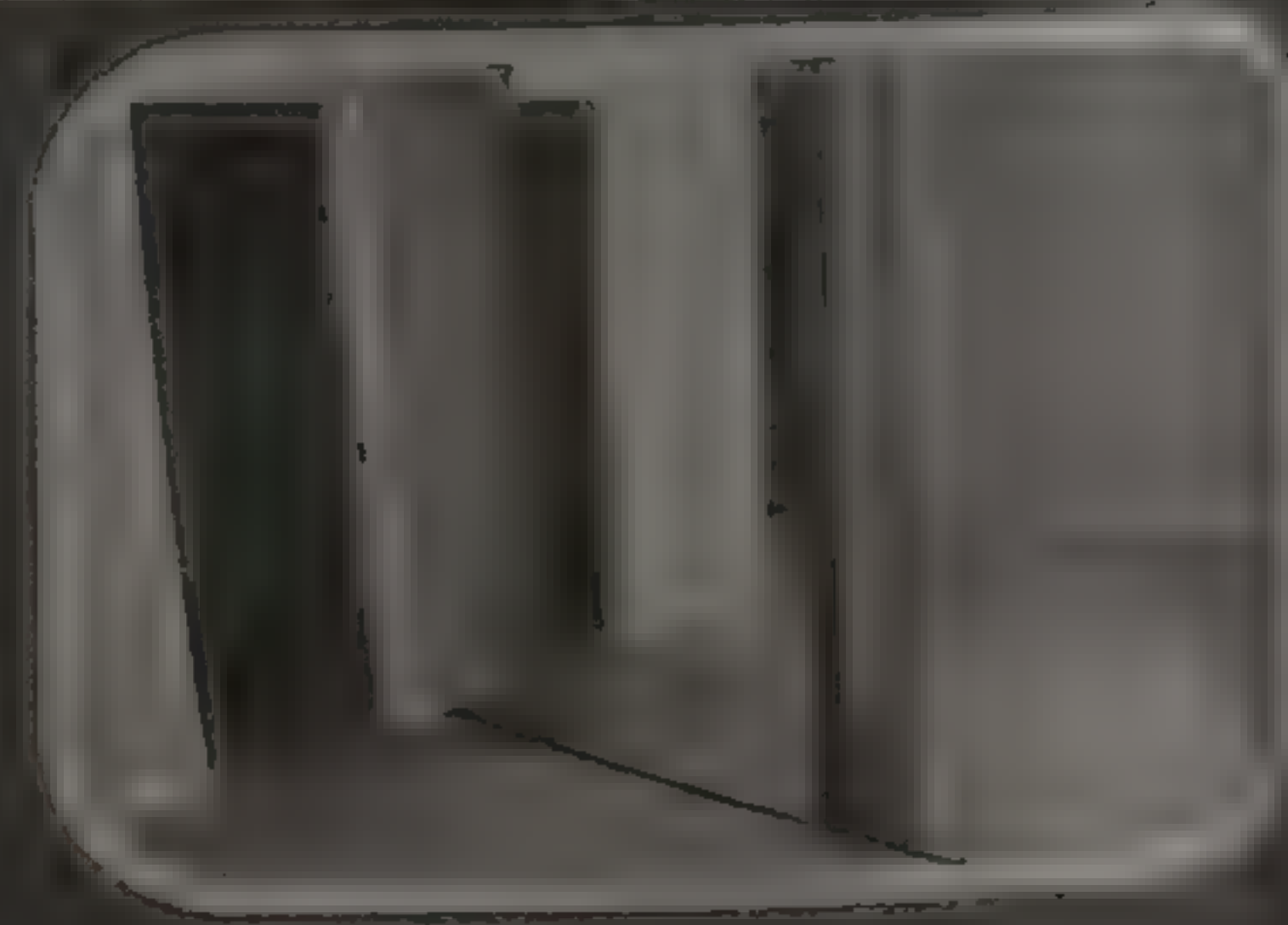
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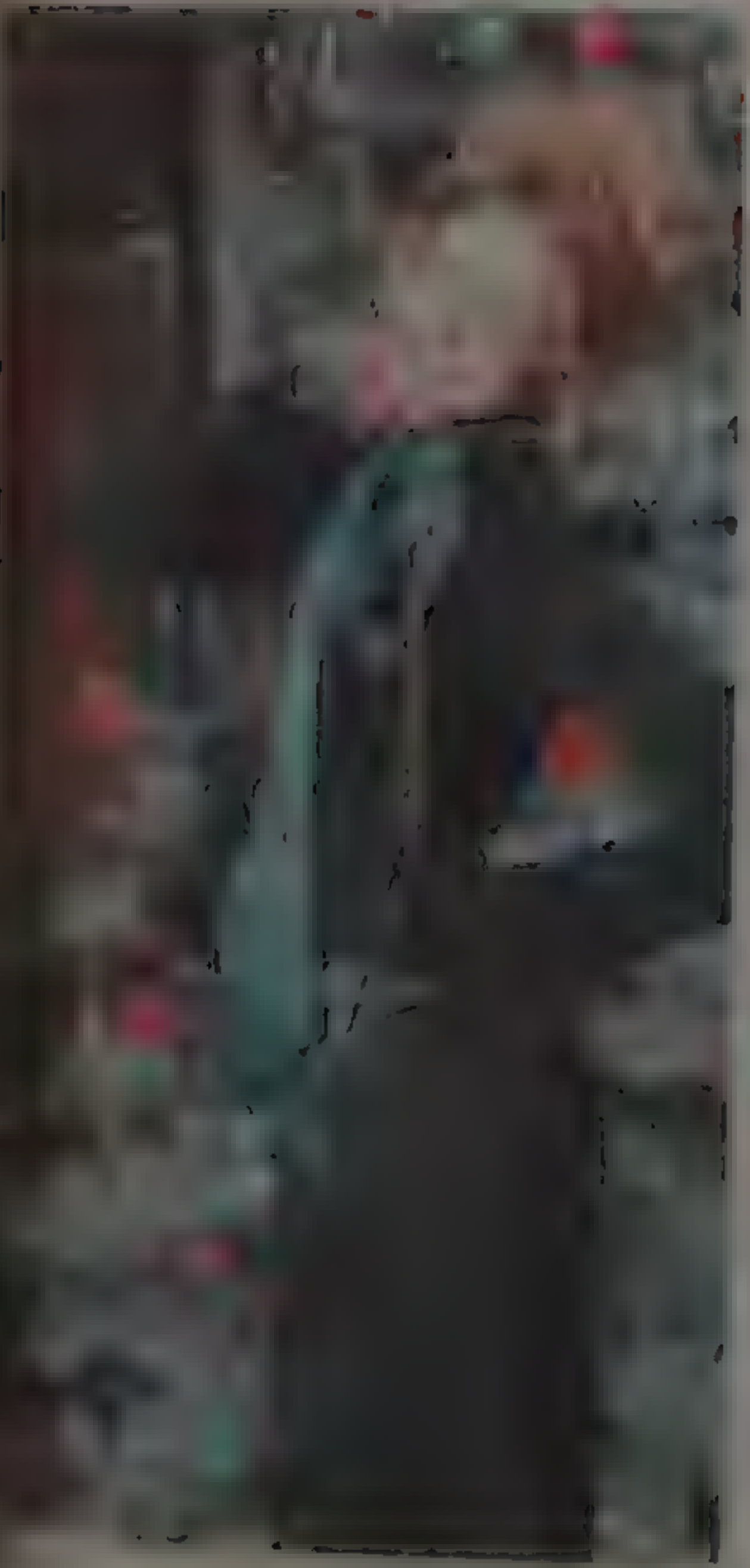
Rob 940-6212 (Mon-Fri 9-6pm) or 418-1267 (till 10pm and on weekends)





2007

# NEW YEARS EVE PARTY GUIDE



Photos by  
Francis Tétrault



## Celebrate New Year's

O'Byrne's Irish Pub New Year's Eve Party 414-6766





Cara: Red cocktail dress by Buenos Aires (Escada); red pumps by Stuart Weitzman (Mayfair); necklace by Xcetera Accessories

Steve: White shirt by Hugo Boss; grey pants and blazer by DryKorn; black cardigan by YMC; boots by Hugo Boss (Henry)





#### ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL

- 104 Street, 432.4611
- New Year's Eve with Duff Robison
- Tickets: \$50 (advance only, three-course lobster dinner at 6 - 8 pm), \$25 (first come first serve 8 pm)

#### AXIS CAFE

- 345 Jasper Avenue, www.c3metro.ca
- Urban Commotion New Year's Eve 2007: Presented by C3 Metro featuring live music by 5 on the side, swing dance lessons, and champagne countdown; menu includes satays, samosas, spanokopis, scallop wraps, crab wontons, smoked salmon, crab and artichoke dip, holiday sweets and more; formal dress code
- Tickets: \$40; available at TIX on theSquare

#### THE BANK ULTRA LOUNGE

- 765 Jasper Avenue, 420.9098
- Electric Circus New Year's Eve Party upstairs: top-notch bartending, window dancers, and a DJ spinning favourite old school and retro hits; 8 pm - 2 am; minimum age 21+ • Be Fabulous downstairs New Year's Eve: Chill out from the Electric Circus with a relaxed down-tempo party, sip champagne from ice sculptures
- Tickets: \$40 (for both upstairs and downstairs; includes champagne, party favours and hors d'oeuvres); make a reservation for dinner to have a table for the entire night, as well as a complementary bottle of champagne; Plate Service \$16.95 (\$13.95 without dessert)

#### BAR WILD

- 551 Whyte Avenue, 432.0814
- New York New York—New Year's Eve 2006: New Year's Eve theme New York, watch the ball drop at Bar Wild and get your picture taken in Times Square; 8 pm; no cover; no minors; casual dress

#### BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE

- 10425 - 82 Avenue, 439.1082
- New Year's Eve with Headband main floor and special surprise guests; DJ on the Rooftop and DJ in the basement; 7 pm (door)
- Tickets: \$10 (includes champagne at midnight); tickets available at BDF

#### BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ

- 9624 - 76 Avenue, 989.2861
- New Year's Eve 2006 with the Rault Brothers Band: roots music with the band starts at around 9 pm for dancing; 7 pm for a four-course menu; an early sitting for just dining is possible (5 - 7 pm)
- Tickets: \$65; call 989.2861 for reservations

#### BUSTLOOSE.COM GALA PARTY TOUR

- www.bustloose.com
- New Year's Eve Gala Party Tour: a Club Crawl with class featuring luxury transportation between venues, access to the hottest parties at the hottest nightclubs, champagne and party favours; formal/semi-formal dress-code; 6 pm starting the night at the Thirsty Turtle. From there the Bustloose buses will crash the parties at The Globe and Cowboys with an 11 pm arrival at Bar Wild to ring in 2007
- Tickets: \$35 (includes BustLoose.com Party Bus transportation between venues; VIP admission entrance and cover charge into four New Year's Eve parties; one complementary drink at each bar, champagne, prizes and party favours); tickets available at www.bustloose.com

#### BUZHIFAM ENTERTAINMENT

- B102 - 10010 - 107A Avenue, 266.9178, 278.0515
- Happy Eid and Happy New Year 2007: Featuring hip hop, R&B, reggae and requests with DJ Ice-blazin', Fartuun Cumar performing songs from her new album, B Plenty and Young Cee (Mr Tim); 9 pm-5 am; Edmonton Police Security
- Tickets: \$30; for information email buzhfam@yahoo.com

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

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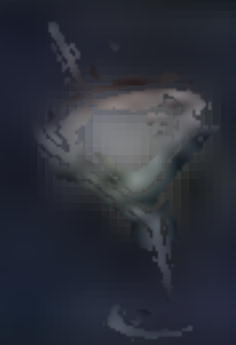
(403) 936-7000

www.theCuttingRoomSalon.com









PHOTOGRAPH BY [illegible]



Black dress by Tara Jarmon; gold-leaf necklace by Mimi & Marge (Party Pope)

Shirt and tie by Band of Outsiders; cardigan by YMC; belt by D & G; shoes by D'YKoro (Henry)

#### THE MONTON

111 St. J. 463.9467  
Live: Featuring Colleen Rae and Cornerstone; plated dinner \$15-\$25

#### THE WHEATHEAD

153 Street, 424.9467  
Live: Featuring Almost Anna; buffet dinner \$15-\$25

#### THE PUB AND RESTAURANT

109 Street, 426.5555  
New Year with live music by Octain • Tickets: \$50 (dinner)/\$15 (available at Ceili's)

#### THE YATRE

101A Avenue, 451.8000  
MSTRKRFT, Shout Out Out Out and DJs Luke Morrison, Nestor Grooves, Cain, Cary Ryan, Johnny D'ericco; 9 pm - 2 am; 18+ \$10-\$15 - \$53; available at TicketMaster, Connected-Ent.ca, by phone 963.4501, 710.2500

#### THE BALLROOM

101A Avenue, 451.8000  
New Year's Eve. Featuring the swingin' sounds of orchestra; 6:30 pm (start); buffet dinner at 7:15 pm; champagne; dance 9:30 pm - 1:30 am (includes dinner and dance); tickets available at TIX on the West Terrace Inn

PHOTOGRAPH BY [illegible]

# ring in NYE on VUEWEEKLY

CHECK OUT  
PAGE 51

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2006

# Cirque DuoS.

DINNERTIME AND A SHOW TICKET \$75

INCLUDES: 4 course meal seating at 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm  
(Oilers vs Flames @ 6pm)

PARTYTIME AND A SHOW \$40 9:00 pm

ENTERTAINMENT 9pm

Juggling, painted dancers, magician,  
face airbrushing, and Shnaw (DJ)

CHAMPAGNE, PARTY FAVORS  
AND 1:00 AM SNACKS



O·V·E·R·T·I·M·E  
BROILER & IMPERIAL

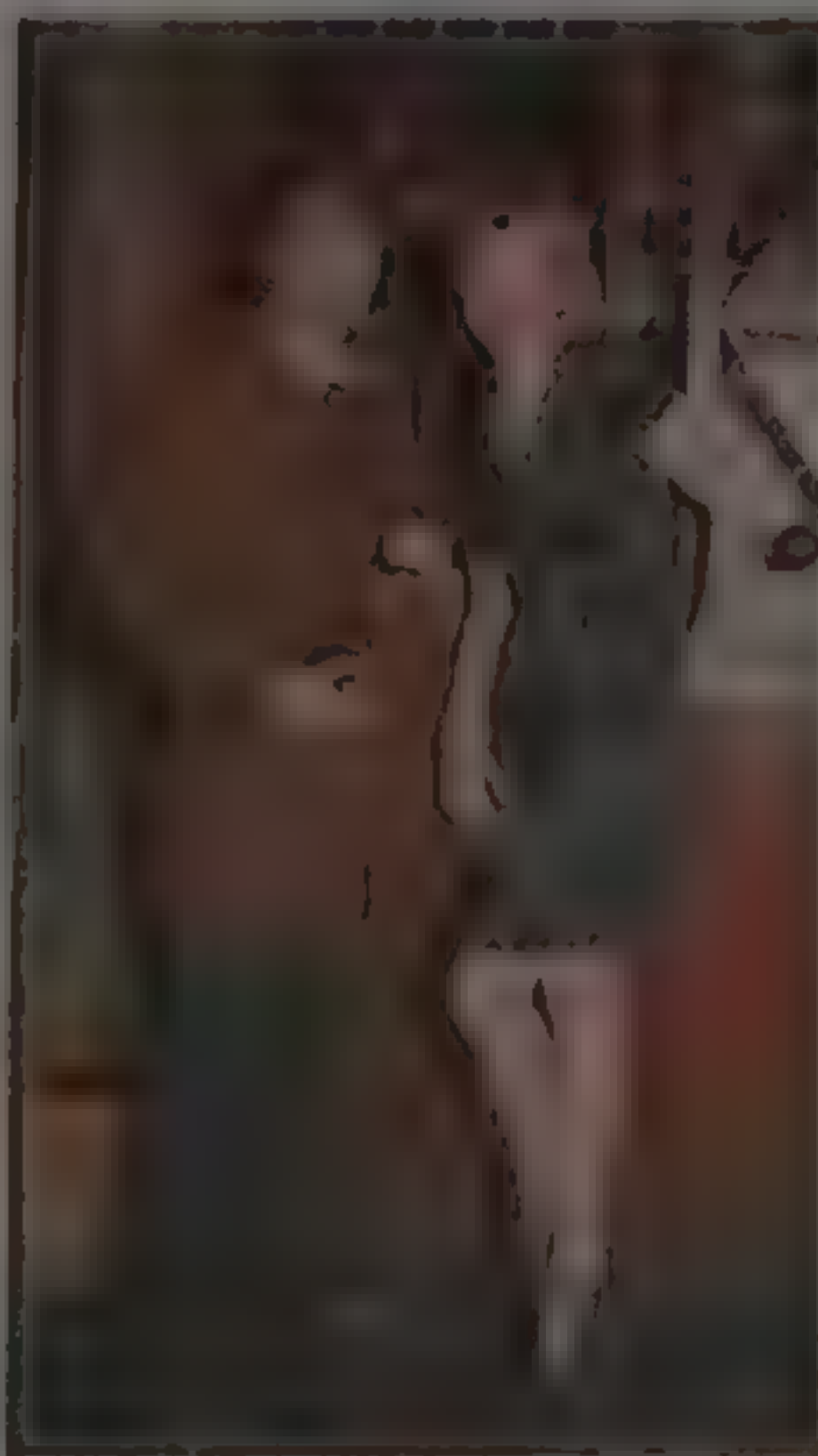
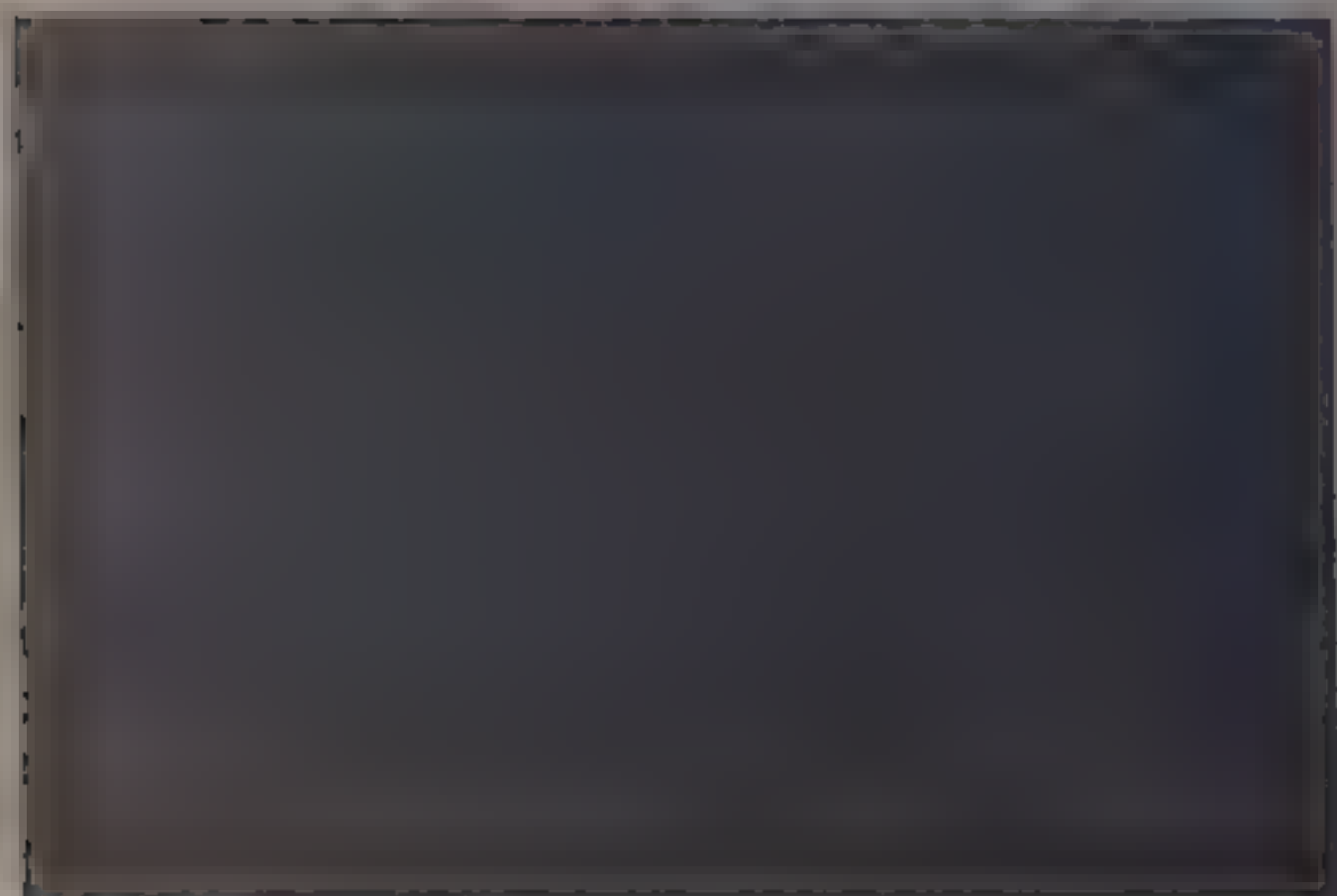






Cara: Silk polka dot dress by Betsey Johnson; metallic mary-jane shoes by Repetto (Gravity Pope)

Steve: Shirt and tie by Band of Outsiders; pants by DryKorn; belt by D & G; boots by Hugo Boss; brown jacket by An Earnest Cut & Sew (Henry)



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33

## COLISEUM INN

11845 Wayne Gretzky Drive, 708.1749/298.1203/718.1209  
• New Year's Eve with singer Abduqaadir O Jubba with DJ Tige  
• Tickets: \$30; phone for more information

## COMIC STRIP

1646 Bourbon Street, WEM, 483.5999  
• Ring in the New Year with Rob Pue and Rick Bronson  
• Three great New Year Packages to choose from

## COOK COUNTY SALOON

8010 Gateway Boulevard, 432.2665  
• New Year's Eve with Tera Lee (Big Earl 96.3 FM) and her band, prizes and party favours; country casual dress; 8 pm (door) no minors  
• Tickets: \$15 (adv); available at Cook County

## COWBOYS

10102 - 180 Street, 481.8739  
• New Year's Eve Frost Gala: 7 pm (door)  
• Tickets: \$20 (until Dec 23), more at the door (includes party favours, champagne at midnight)

## CROWN AND ANCHOR PUB

15277 Castle Downs Road, 472.7696  
• New Year's Eve Party featuring live entertainment by Train Wreck; feature menu available, party favours and champagne. Reservations recommended  
• No cover charge

## DANTE'S

17328 Stony Plain Road, 486.4448  
• Casino Royale 007—New Year's Eve Gala: Completely immerse yourself in the world of Bond. Indulge in a Martini "shaken not stirred" ... the mission is to dress as your favourite Bond character, to be the exotic spy you've always dreamed and to win the Best Bond and Bond Girl contest  
• High Stake Bistro: dance the night away, live Motown and Latin dance music by The Catalyst  
• Grand Ball Room: DJ Goldfinger will be spinning world tracks and classic Bond-esque sounds; also featuring the Casino Royale go-go dance, Martini contest and a chance to win many prizes. Menu featuring the cuisine of Venice; antipasti; carpaccio di manzo  
• Tickets: \$109 (four-course dinner); \$95 (three-course dinner); \$29 (dance only) (includes party favours, glass of champagne and welcome Martini Royale)

## DELTA EDMONTON SOUTH—TOP OF THE INN

4404 Gateway Boulevard, 1.866.499.3223/780.920.4450, www.fancytoez.com  
• The Best is Yet to Come—Jazz New Year: Presented by Fancy Toez, featuring the jazz band, the Tuxedo Junkies; formal attire; 5:30 pm - 1:30 am minimum age 21+; cocktails at 5:30 pm; dinner at 7 pm  
• Tickets: \$99 (special advance tickets: available until 6 pm Dec 15) (deadline to buy tickets: Dec 29) Must have advance reservation (includes prime rib plate service dinner, party favours, champagne at midnight and more); tickets available at Delta Edmonton South Hotel 431-3457, and on the Square

## DELTA EDMONTON SOUTH

4404 Gateway Boulevard, 1.866.499.3223/780.920.4450  
• 7th Annual Latin New Year's Eve: Featuring the Latin rhythms of 11 piece X-Band; DJ Moreno alongside DJ Reinier "El Cubano" will play the best in ballroom, Latin, Top-40, and retro beats; also featuring a special performance show by Esquina, Latina Latin corner; dress to impress minimum age 18+; cocktails at 5:30 pm, dinner at 7:30 pm, dance at 9 pm ends at 3 am  
• Dinner ticket: \$75 (includes plate service dinner, party favours and champagne at midnight and live band entertainment); deadline to buy ticket is Dec 29; dance-only ticket: \$30 (adv)/\$40 (door) (includes party favours, champagne at midnight and live entertainment after 9 pm - 3 am); tickets available at 780-63-PARTY

CONTINUES ON



# NEW YEARS EVE 2006

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# Host the killer cocktail party

JOEL KELLY / joel@vuweekly.com

Forget fat men in red velour or this "Jesus" character I keep hearing about: everybody knows that the real reason for the holiday season is to party your pants off and claim "yuletide cheer" to explain how that lampshade ended up on your head.

What with work-related Christmas/Hanukkah/Kwanzaa parties, New Year's Eve and celebrating or mourning the holiday bonus parties, there are so many shindigs at this time of year that they all sort of blend into one another. But have no fear, dear reader and potential party host! After countless headache-plagued mornings-after and more than a few unexplained tattoos, I have culled together sure-fire tips to make even the most dreary dinner-party stand out like it's 1999!

My first tip is to never, ever say that you are partying in the way the artist formerly known as Prince would deem acceptable. That's so 2002.

**FIRST, MAKE A** frank assessment of your potential party locale. The closet-sized suite that you rent from the crazy cat lady upstairs will not be cosy for you and your 50 closest friends. It will be lame and everyone will hate you. Bars exist for a reason.

If your pad is larger, think long and hard about where people will stand and what stuff you're willing to have destroyed. Plan for open spaces—people who are standing up are more

## HOST COCKTAILS

likely to be talking to each other or perhaps even dancing.

The size constraints of Party Central fuel the most important stage of party planning: the guest list. Try for a wide range of personalities, featuring fun people who may or may not know each other. However, the zany dude with dance moves straight out of "Thriller" might not be willing to help you serve drinks and clean up, so don't forget about the wallflowers. Try to keep the guest list from overflowing the space, as you will likely have last-minute invites and party crashers.

Now, it is widely accepted that theme parties often fail and fail hard, but a few elements here and there will turn it from a party to a *partaaaaee*. Rather than boring BYOB, decide on a few simple cocktails that will also serve as goofy conversation starters. On the invitation, assign your guest to bring a bottle of the basics: vodka, rum, gin or a versatile liqueur like Cointreau. Supply the rest of the ingredients for fun, silly drinks (my favourites are the girly martinis—Cosmopolitan, anyone?). There are oodles of websites that will supply you with cocktail recipes based on your starting tipples.

Furthermore, consider your guests' apparel as an opportunity to catalyze conversation. In my experience, people will jump at the opportunity to get

dressed up, but one man's casual semiformal is another's tuxedo and top hat. Stay away from the campy costume themes, but give some specific guidelines—for example, have everyone wear all red or an interesting hat.

**HAVING SENT OUT** the invitations, you might be tempted sit back and just let the party happen, but you'd be wronger than a threesome with you, your grandmother and a midget. Nobody is asking you to be Martha Stewart, but wise decisions can make a big difference in almost every facet of your party.

A word of warning: don't try to do everything on your own. You want to have a good time at the do, too. Rely on a few trusted friends and delegate as much as possible. Ask a few guests to bring an hour's worth of party music on CD and ask your friend, the one with the 80-gig iPod and the "music is my boyfriend" tattoo, to DJ.

Food often takes a backseat to hooch at these affairs, but anything beyond plunking down a bowl of ketchup chips goes a long way towards impressing your guests. Keep it as simple as you can; after a few drinks, no one is really going to appreciate the subtleties of your truffles ensconced with caviar. One of my best hors d'oeuvres was crackers with ham and pineapple, sprinkled with brown sugar and topped with melted cheese.

Note: just because they happen to have "cocktail" in their name, cocktail



weenies are only acceptable if you want to be called "Mr Weenie" until you move to Calgary out of sheer embarrassment.

Stagger two or three courses so people don't stuff themselves and get sleepy. Also, simple garnishes like citrus zest or rosemary sprigs lend themselves quite elegantly to more formal occasions.

When your guests aren't busy eating or drinking, they'll be ... mingling. Yikes. If the thought of that gets you nervous, then maybe it's best to provide a few starting points.

Pretty much everyone has a digital camera these days, so take advantage of it: Google "Jowler" and thank me later. Alternatively, I have been known to use my trusty sharpie marker as an ice breaker. Drawing a full-bodied, Groucho Marx-style mustache on the inside of my index finger and

holding it below my nose is always good for a laugh, whether it's a bit tipsy. Basically, any reason to be goofy, possibly incriminating or a foolproof way to a fun vibe.

Finally, don't wait until the party starts dying down to think about how people will be getting home. Try to get a taxi on a Friday or Saturday night, especially on New Year's Eve, harder than building a nuclear reactor out of broken wristwatches. Encourage people to crash on a couch, enlist a few neighbours to let guests sleep there. You can always kick people out in the morning by announcing that everyone is invited out to Ca Mosaics for brunch.

Once the guests are gone, survey the damages and clean up an area in desperate need of attention. You can wait—take a long nap and bask in the glow of hosting a killer party. v



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# CARNIVAL 2007

## IN THE CITY

### NEW YEARS EVE 2007

Monday, Dec 31st, 2006 / Join in a night of partying  
Power-Nightclub for CARNIVAL 2006

Now, it's all about the entertainment.  
Dance, drink, and celebrate!

Don't miss the live performance by  
DJ's and the band (approx. 10:00pm - 1:00am)

12:00am - 1:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

1:00am - 2:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

2:00am - 3:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

3:00am - 4:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

4:00am - 5:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

5:00am - 6:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

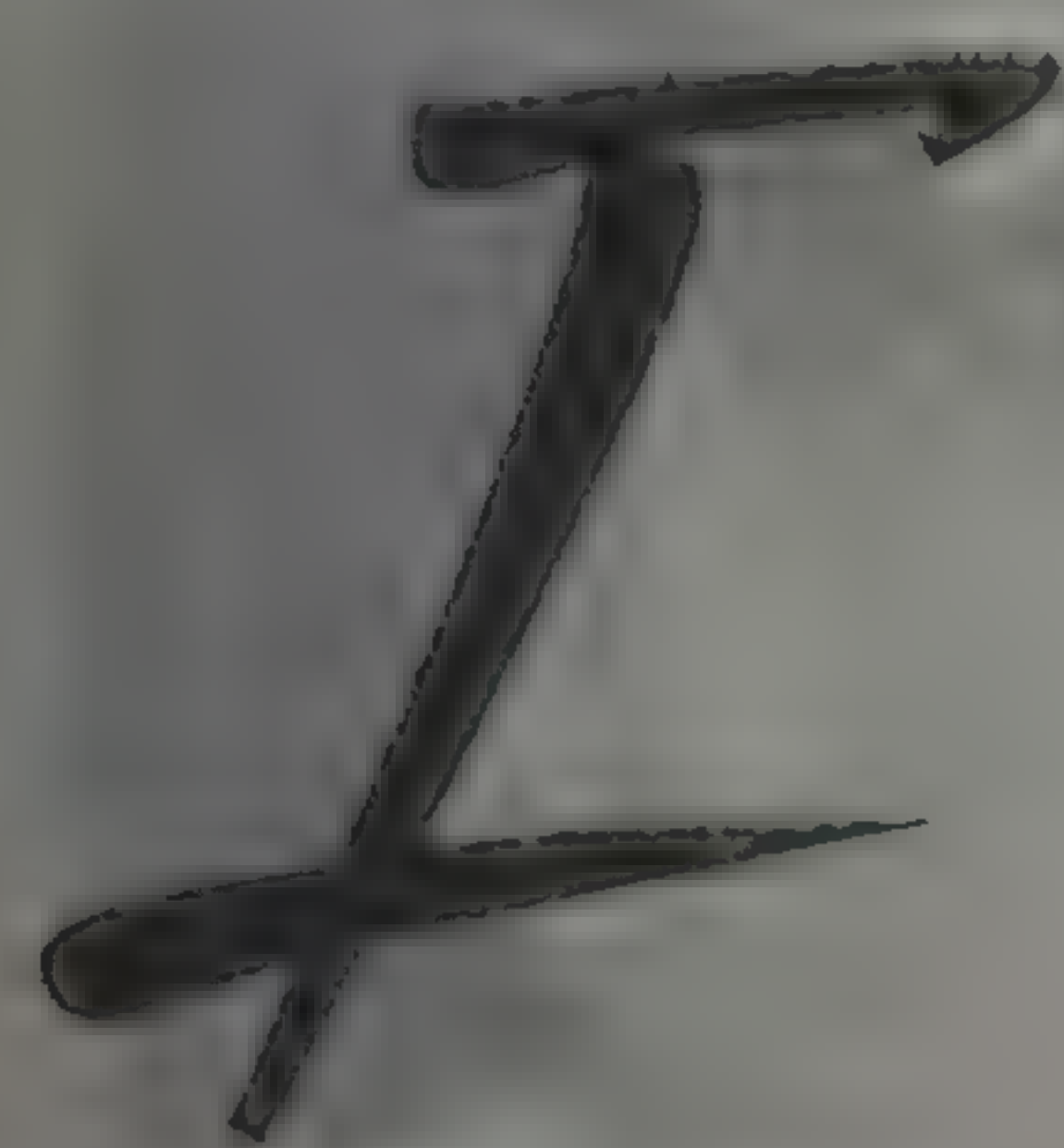
6:00am - 7:00am  
Live performance by DJ's and the band

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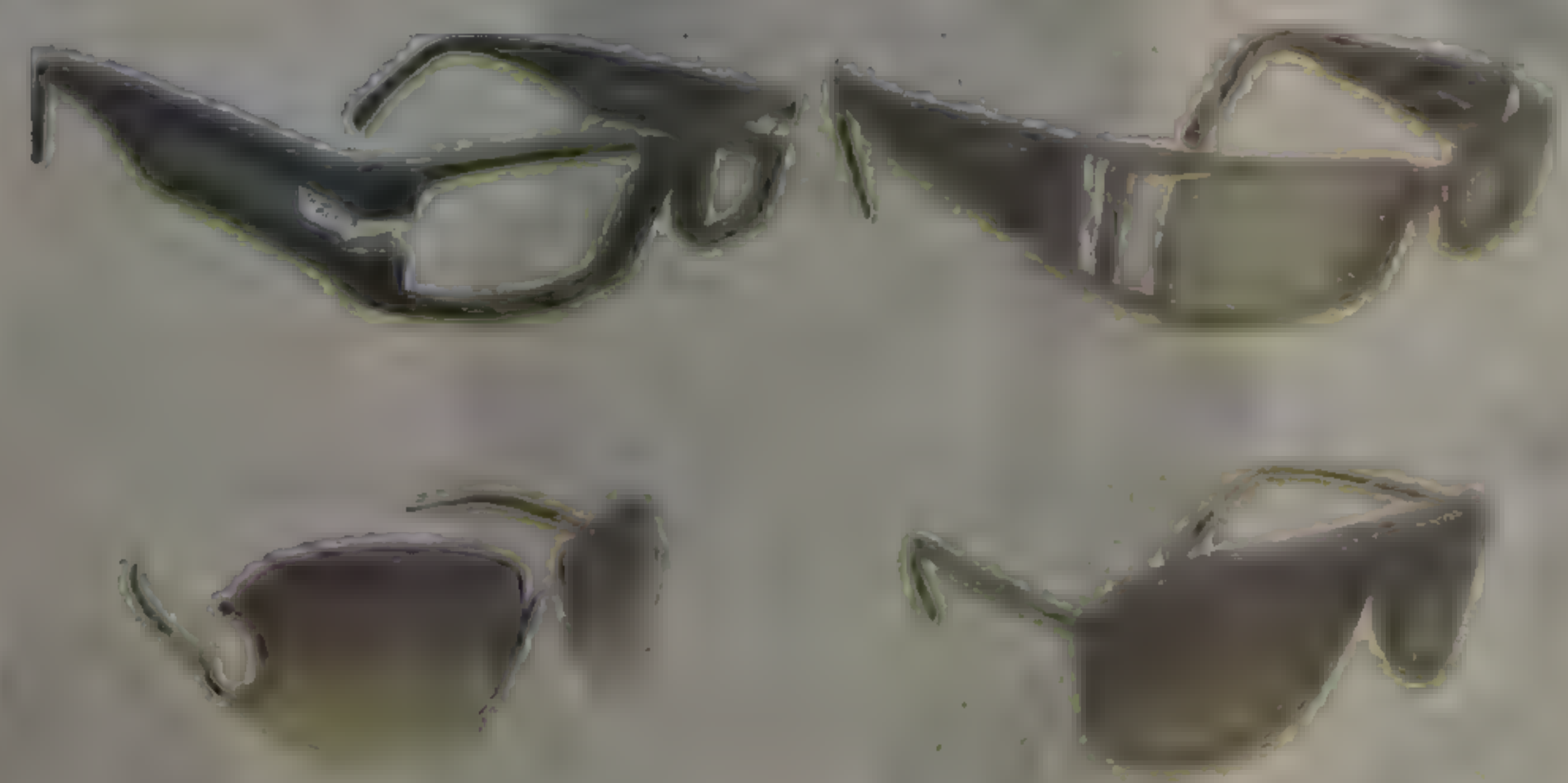
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TOM FORD



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## NEW YEARS EVE PARTY GUIDE



**Cara:** Black dress by My Fair Lady (Escada); shoes by Calvin Klein (May-fair); ring by Excetera Accessories

**Steve:** Shirt by Hugo Boss; pants by DryKorn; cardigan by YMC (Henry)



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

### DOWNTOWN EDMONTON

Various downtown venues, 423.2822 ext 24; [www.eventsedmonton.ca](http://www.eventsedmonton.ca)

- New Year's Eve Downtown 2006: Western Canada's largest New Year's celebration. An alcohol-free event featuring entertainment, strolling entertainers, public skating, a street dance, family activities and fireworks
- Free

### EDMONTON OFF DOWNTOWN

10209 - 100 Avenue, 421.1026

- Say Goodnight Whitey Houston Rockin' New Year's Eve Bash: Featuring a Rock-Off with the Get Down rock 'n' roll band and the mighty sounds of The Fat Dave Crime Wave dueling for rock supremacy. May the best band win
- There will be assorted favours, dips. Edmonton's favourite sons play mano-a-mano, tete-a-tete, and mi-casa-es-sous-casa; 9 pm (door); 11 pm (bands)
- Tickets: \$10

### FAIRVIEW HOTEL MAISONNAISE — EMPIRE BALLROOM

10065 - 100 Street, 424.5181

- Edmonton International New Year's Eve Gala 2006: Formal, fashionable and trendy; cocktails at 7 pm; menu: dinner of distinction with vegetarian options if pre-ordered at 7:30 pm; no minors; dance at 9 pm - 3 am, live house buffet at 11:30 pm; lots of prizes, party favours, dinner music by harpist Kyra Pedersen; DJ Tomski will provide upscale trendy, happy dance music, very eclectic with good vibrations from the past and future (no country, rap, hip hop)
- Tickets: \$125

### FANTASYLAND HOTEL

Fantasyland Hotel, Beverly Hills Ballroom, WEM, 444 3000

- Danny Hooper's Classic Country New Year's Gala: Join Danny Hooper and his band, the Honky Tonk Heroes as they ring in the New Year
- Tickets: \$99 each (includes buffet)

### FESTIVAL PLACE

100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park, 449.3378

- New Year's Eve with the K-Tel's: Ring in the New Year in style at Festival Place; buffet dinner in the lobby at 7:30 pm (with desserts and coffee party favours with complimentary champagne for the midnight toast); after dinner dance to the popular retro music of the K-Tels, fronted by Thomas Alexander; 7:30 pm
- Tickets: \$70 each; available at the Festival Place box office, and TicketMaster

### FEVER

2554, Upper Level WEM, 443.6666

- Carnival 2007: Trapeze, silks and magic featuring Cirque du Soleil type performances by the Firefly Theatre; 8 pm - 3 am; no minors
- Tickets: \$24.99 (adv); more at the door; tickets available at Fever, Fairview Spa, Alexis (WEM and Kingsway), Foosh (Whyte Ave), TicketMaster

### FOUR ROOMS

137 Edmonton City Centre East, 426.4767

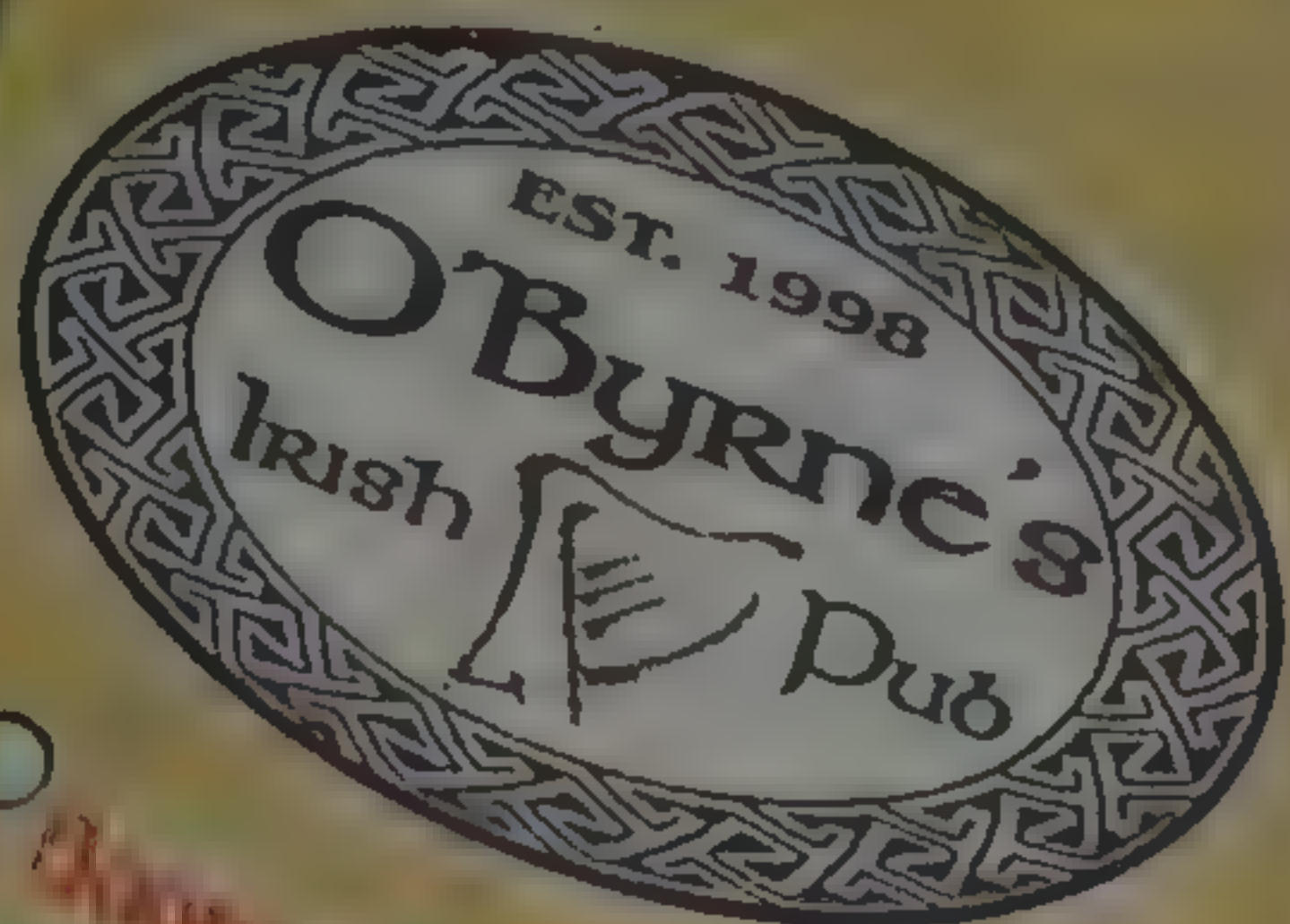
- Old Hollywood Glamour New Year's Eve: Food from the golden age Hollywood; 6 - 9 pm; five-course dinner
- Jazz party with the Don Berner Trio featuring Shannon Tyler at 9 pm
- Tickets: \$35

### FRANCO'S — VICTORIA TRAIL

12881 - 50 Street, 476.4333

- New Year's Eve Party: Great food, karaoke and all the trimmings
- No tickets needed





BOOKS OPEN IN 9PM  
**Premium Ticket \$30**  
Guarantee your seat!

**Music Party Ticket \$20**

**Both tickets including:**  
Dinner, drinks, and live music  
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Call 414-222-2222 for  
more info  
or to buy  
tickets



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party favors

**Spice of Life Tickets \$20**  
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DECEMBER 31

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INCLUDES CHAMPAGNE & PARTY FAVORS  
TICKETS \$40.00 AVAILABLE AT THE URBAN LOUNGE

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AND GUESTS

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PLUS DJ CHOKLIT ELVIS

DECEMBER 31

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THE  
ONE  
ON WHYTE

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## NEW YEARS EVE PARTY GUIDE

Cara: Glasses by Tom Ford (I-Optical)

Steve: Glasses by J.F. Rey (I-Optical)



### GINGUR SKY LUNCHEON

15505 - 118 Avenue, 913.4312 / 953.3606, [www.gingursky.com](http://www.gingursky.com)

• 2nd Annual Gingur Sky All White and Silver Affair NYE 2007: Featuring Toronto's DJ Black Reaction (World Clash Champions 2006) and E-town's Elite Sounds: Bomb Squad, Invinceable and Babygirl; semi-formal dress code in effect; Edmonton Police Security on site all night; reserve your VIP

• Tickets: \$25; more at the door (includes champagne, party favours, souvenir towels ...); for ticket info email: [gingur.sky@gmail.com](mailto:gingur.sky@gmail.com)

### ST. GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

10037 - 84 Avenue, 420.1757

• Mid-Winter Songs—New Year's Eve concert: Featuring the Ensemble de Rue Usher in the new year with choral music; champagne and chocolates at intermission; 7:30 pm

• Tickets: \$17 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior); available at TIX on the Square

### LEPET'S

7601 - 115 Street, 436.1161

• A New Year's Eve murder mystery: The Auction—Who killed Baroness Audrey von Muchen: An unforgettable night of international intrigue and suspense, interactive; live world fusion Latin music by Aroot's Bazaar

• Tickets: \$85 (includes entertainment, dinner, dessert, coffee/tea/champagne and midnight lunch); tickets available by phone, group discounts available

### THE NOVA CLUB

2940 Calgary Trail Southbound, 465.6800

• New Year's Eve celebration: dinner at 6 pm, show starts at 8:30 pm, bubbly at midnight

• Tickets on sale now

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

# ring in NYE on VUEWEEKLY

CHECK OUT  
PAGE 51

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Cara: Black stripe cocktail dress by Holt Renfrew; flapper shoes by Nina (Mayfair)

Steve: Japanese-style jacket by Hopsac (Holt Renfrew); greypinstrip pant, black shirt and tie by Holt Renfrew; shoes by Hugo Boss (Henry)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

## JASPER — FAIRMONT JASPER PARK LODGE

Old Lodge Road, Jasper, 780.852.5107

- **The Great Hall: Times Square—The Ultimate New Year's Party:** Fill your glass at the Bounty of Bubbly sparkling wine station, sample decadent goodies and salute the midnight hour with holiday cheers, toasts, music and dancing
- Tickets: \$35

- **Beauvert Dining Room: The Enchanted Forest:** Enter the maze of trees that guide you down the path to a festival fit for the Gods, complete with a buffet, adventure and fantasy. With muses, mystical creatures, fairies and a beautiful princess to help welcome in 2007
- Tickets: \$125 (adult)/\$63 (child 5-12 years)/free for children under 5 (includes Great Hall Time Square)

- **The Edith Cavell: Tuxes and Tiaras:** Seven plated courses, while entertained by a musical trio; tuxes and tiaras are optional; 18+
- Tickets: \$199 per person (includes Great Hall Gala)

## DEXYLL AND HYDE PUB

10610 - 100 Avenue, 426.5381

- New Year's Eve with pop/rock music from the '60s and '70s by 4-piece band Headwind; dinner 5:30 - 9 pm; party favours at midnight
- Tickets: \$5 (cover, donated to Santa's Anonymous)/\$25 (roast beef dinner, \$5 to Santa's Anonymous); reservations suggested for large groups

## KINGSKNIGHT PUB

9221 - 34 Avenue, 433.2599

- LIPHT (alternative rock)

## KINSMEN CLUBHOUSE — ST ALBERT

Rodeo Grounds, Riel Drive, St Albert, 970.1557/458.1999

- New Year's Dance with the rockin' blues band SlowBurn; casual dress
- late lunch at 11:30 pm, with champagne and party favours at midnight prizes through the evening; 8 pm (door), 9 pm - 1:30 am (music)
- Tickets: \$20 (couple)/\$10 (single); available at 970.1557 or 458.1999

## NEW CITY

10081 Jasper Avenue, 429.2582

- The Legendary New Year's Eve Bash: Downstairs: DJ Blue Jay, Nik Romantik; Upstairs: DJ Dildozer and Nazz Nomad; party favours, no minors; 7 pm (door)
- Tickets: \$15 (door)

## O'BRYEN'S IRISH PUB

10616 - 82 Avenue, 414.6766

- DJ Finnegan spins the tunes for you to dance into 2007; 9 pm (door)
- Basic: Bottle of champagne, the always popular big bag of swag, party hats and favours, access to free bbq at midnight
- Premium (limited quantities): Guaranteed seating before 10pm; bottle of champagne, the always popular big bag of swag, party hats and favours, priority access to free bbq after midnight
- Tickets: \$20 (basic)/\$30 (premium); available by phone at 414.6766

## O'CONNOR'S IRISH PUB

9013 - 88 Avenue, 465.4834

- Patsy and Brian and the Band; Don Marcotte on bass and Pascal Lecours on drums; 9 pm
- Tickets: \$10 (includes appetizers and complementary drink)

## ONE ON WHYTE

10544C - 82 Avenue, 437.7699

- Sonic 102.9 presents Social Code and Ten Second Epic with guests from Burnin' Sands, and DJ Choklit Elvis; champagne, party favours; 7:30 pm (door)
- Tickets: \$40; available at the One on Whyte

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42



NEW YEARS' EVE 06/07 WITH

# THE DEAD BAND

AND SUPER SPECIAL SURPRISE GUESTS



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Mansion  
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HOLLYWOOD'S  
GOLDEN AGE!

FROM 6-9PM  
DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR'S  
JAZZ PARTY

102 Avenue Entrance • Edmonton Centre | 426-4767

## NEW YEARS EVE PARTY GUIDE



### ON THE ROCKS

11740 Jasper Avenue, 482.4767

- Ring in the New Year with Line of Sight and DJ Kiwi
- Tickets: \$20 (full-size Kokanee Beerfridge to be given away)

### OVERTIME DOWNTOWN

10304 - 111 Street, 423.1643

- Evening at Cirque Du O.T.: Entertainment at 9 pm including juggling, painted dancers, magician, face airbrushing and DJ Shnaw, champagne and party favours and 1 am snacks
- Tickets: \$75 (dinnertime and a show, includes four-course meal seating at 6 pm and 8 pm, Oiler vs Flames at 6 pm); \$40 (partytyme and a show 9 pm)

### OVERTIME SOUTH

160, 4211 - 106 Street, 485.1717

- Hollywood Glam Night, Bogart and Bardotte, the stars of the past dance; dress Hollywood glamour or formal
- Tickets: Plated dinner and party \$35 (each)/\$65 (couple); \$15 (lean party only); must make reservations for dinner

### PETROLEUM CLUB

11110 - 108 Street 474.3411

- New Year's Eve Family Dinner: A quiet setting to spend with friends and family, a buffet dinner at 6pm, light entertainment
- Tickets: \$39.50 (each)/\$21 (children under 12)

- New Year's Eve Gala: An eight-course gourmet meal in a magnificent and superbly festooned room; dance to music by the Hit Men, cocktails 6pm, gourmet dinner at 7 pm, dance at 9 pm, cake and Hungarian goulash soup at midnight
- Tickets: \$89 (each)

CONTINUED





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purchases, gift certificates, loyalty card transactions  
with any other offer. Valid until January 1, 2007.

# TALLCREST

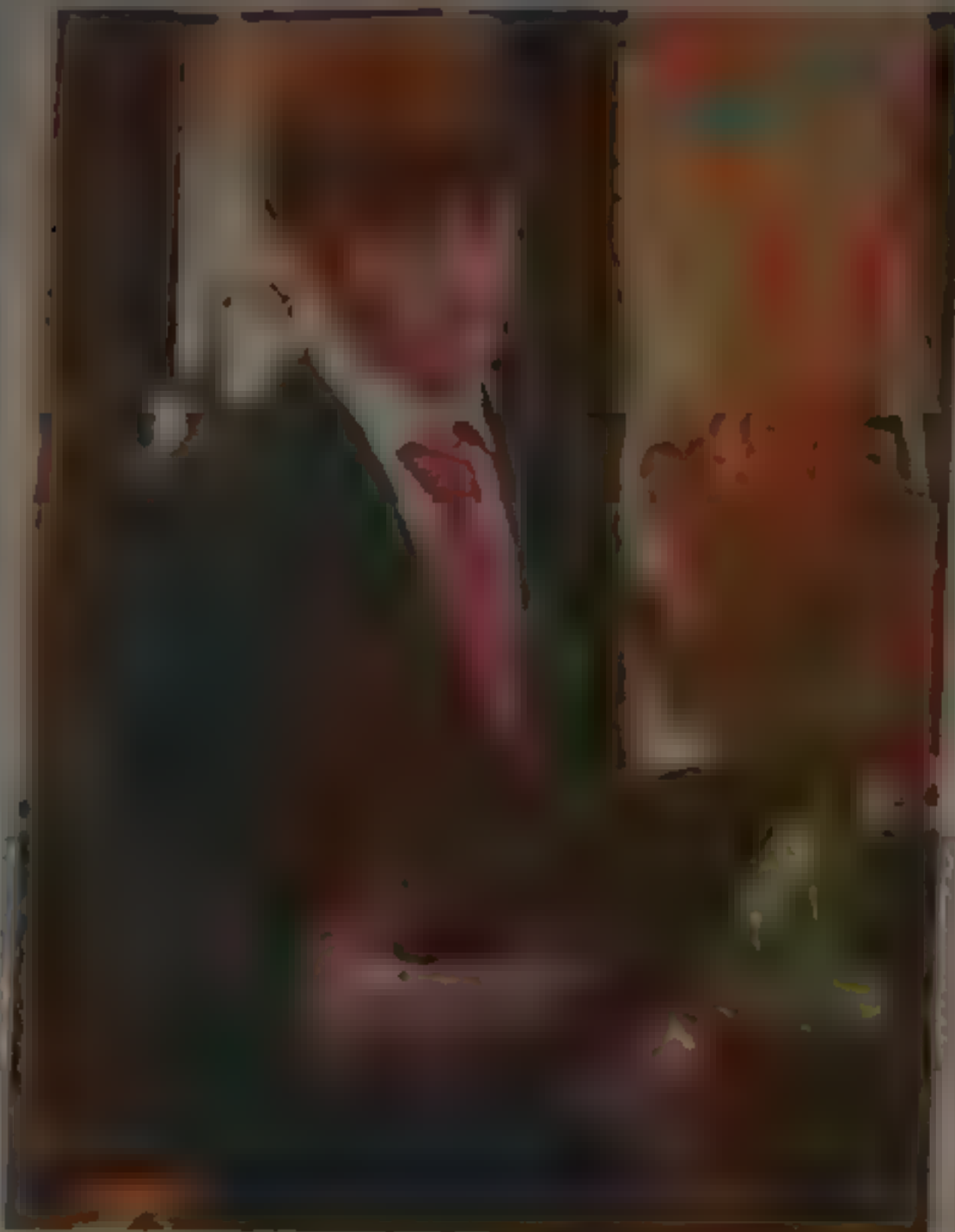
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Cara: Black cocktail  
dress from Holt  
Renfrew: glasses  
by Roberto Cavalli  
(I-Optical); neck-  
lace from Xcetera  
Accessories

Steve: Pinstripe  
shirt and striped tie  
from Halls



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44

#### POWERPLANT

U of A Campus

- A New Year's Eve Masquerade Gala: Presented by Rowdy McD in the PowerPlant will be transformed featuring prizes, alternative entertain-ment by the Frosted Tipz, Bebop Cortez, the Mark Birtles Project and D.
- Tickets: \$41 (includes mask upon entry, prizes, entertainment and more), tickets available at Megatunes, Blackbyrd, and Listen

#### THE ROOST

10315 - 104 Street, 426 3130

- Harkens theme New Year's Eve: Dress-up as any hero from the beginning of time; featuring two DJs downstairs playing retro music; one DJ upstairs playing new music; buffet dinner and party favours; 7pm (door)
- Tickets: \$10 (member)/\$14 (non-member); no advance tickets, tickets available at the door only

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COLOURBLIND - 10544-82 AVE - 439-2939.

PITCHEL - 100040 82 AVE - 481-1000

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INFO LINE: 489-SHOW (7469)



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**SALOON**  
EDMONTON, CANADA

GO WILD THIS  
**NEW YEAR'S**  
DECEMBER 31-2006

**JO HIKK**



DOORS OPEN AT 7:00PM... SHOWTIME AT 9:00P

(INCLUDES: SHOW, MIDNIGHT BUFFET AND PARTY FAVOURS)  
GET YOUR TICKETS BEFORE THEY'RE SOLD OUT

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### ROXY THEATRE

1278 - 124 Street, 453.2440

- Vaudevilian New Year's Eve: Music, dancing, theatrics and more featuring Phil Bourne, Tippy Agogo, Mile Zero Dance, Laurelle, visuals by Tim Malkmann, Leo Fx(didge, Theramin, Vin Sanregret, John Armstrong and more), capturing the essence of the Vaudeville era. A Brass Monkey Production hosted by Theatre Network; 8 pm (door)
- Tickets: \$30, available by calling Theatre Network at 453.2440

### RUM JUNGLE

WLM, 8852 - 170 Street, 486.9494

- Citymetropolis.com New Year's Eve Gala. 8 pm (door), minimum age 18+
- Tickets: \$21.20 - \$31.80; available at TicketMaster

### GRANV CONFERENCE CENTRE

9757 Jasper Avenue, 451.8000

- The Bear's Children's Fund New Year's Bash: Featuring Three Days Grace, Thornley and Tupelo Honey; no minors
- Tickets: \$35; available at TicketMaster, net proceeds to the Bear Children's Fund

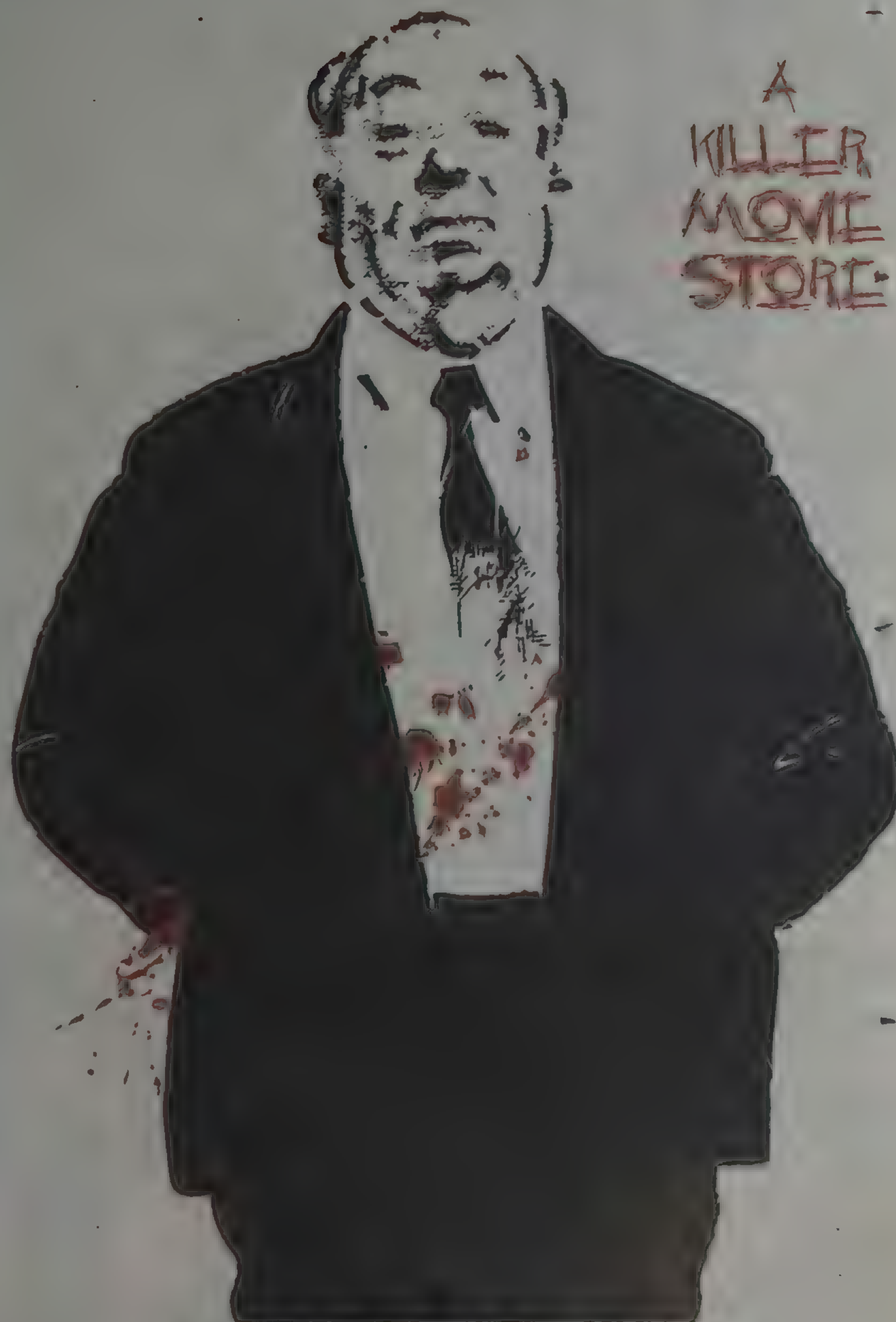
### SHERWOOD PARK - BROADMOOR LAKE PARK

- Broadmoor Lake Park, Oak Street & Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park, 467.2211 • New Year's Eve Family Celebrations: Skating, toboggan and wagon rides, family activities, food, and fireworks at 8 pm
- Free

ENTRANCE TO BENT VALLEY



Steve: Glasses by J. F. Rey (I-Optical)



sneak  
preview

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Cara: Blue top and Otti jacket by Hugo Boss; tuxedo pant by Development; necklace from Stones by Citrine (Gravity Pope)

Steve: Jeans by Earnest Sewn; shirt, jacket and leather tie by Diesel (Gravity Pope)



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

## SIDETRACK CAFÉ

- 10333 - 112 Street, 421.1326
- New Year's Eve with the high-powered nine-piece power funk band The Superband; 9 pm
- Tickets: \$17 (adv)/\$20 (door); available at the Sidetrack Café, Blackbyrd, Listen, Megatunes and TIX on the Square

## SPORTS WORLD ONLINE AND ROLLER DISCO

- 13710 - 104 Street, 472.6336
- New Year's Eve: 1 - 5 pm and 7 pm - 1 am; prize draw every hour
- Tickets: \$10 (incl. complementary rentals); available at Sports World, www.sports-world.ca (open New Year's Day 1-5 pm)

## STARLITE ROOM / VELVET UNDERGROUND

- 10030 - 102 Street, 428.1099
- New Year's with the Mad Bomber Society, Murder City Sparrows, The Ignorers, The Rowdymen, On The Brink; five bands, two DJs on two floors - 8 pm
- Tickets: \$10; available at Blackbyrd, Freecloud, Listen and TIX on the Square

## STONY PLAIN - ROTARY PARK

- 4815 - 44 Avenue
- Family Fest New Year's Eve Celebrations: The Stony Plain Kinsmen Club and the Town of Stony Plain present this family festival to celebrate New Year's. The evening begins with hayrides, hot chocolate and skating, concluding with fireworks at 8:45 pm

## STONE LOUNGE

- 11806 Jasper Avenue, 482.0707
- New Year's Eve 2007: Includes a five-course meal, Moët champagne, party favours, DJs and dancing. Early seating 5 - 7 pm, late seating 8 - 9 pm.
- Call for tickets and reservations

## SUTTON PLACE HOTEL

- 10235 - 101 Street, 428.7111/441.3032
- New Year's Eve dinner and dance: A four-course dinner in the hotel while enjoying live music; enjoy our all you can eat Chocoholic Buffet with a glass of Icewine and complete the evening and dance to music by the Charlie Austin Band; then retire into one of our elegant Deluxe Guestrooms. Seating starts at 6 pm
- Tickets: \$250 (couple) (includes dinner in Capitals Restaurant, Chocoholic Buffet and dancing in Central Park Lounge and one night stay in a deluxe guestroom)
- The morning after ... brunch: New Year's Day brunch at Capitals Restaurant; 11 am - 2 pm • Tickets: \$40 (adult)/\$37 (senior)/\$20 (child 12 and under)

## THE WALL

- 6240 - 99 Street, Argyll, 702.2582
- Back in Black NYE Bash: Rockin' party with Connor's Road, champagne and party favours; no minors; 8 pm
- Tickets: \$20 (adv until Dec 29)/\$40 (after Dec 29); available at TicketMaster

## URBAN LOUNGE AND WHISKY GRILL

- 8111 - 105 Street, 439.3388
- Featuring Mustard Smile, champagne, party favours and DJ Gilligan 7:30 pm (door)
- Tickets: \$25; available at the Urban Lounge

## VELOCENTRIC

- 12840 - 57 Street (east of the Belvedere LRT), 420.1757
- Maendeleo New Year's Eve dance and fundraising evening presented by the Maendeleo Education and Cultural Foundation featuring African culture and entertainment featuring dance, drumming, a food and a silent auction of African artefacts, 6 pm (door)/7 pm (dinner), 9 pm - 2 am (entertainment); cash bar available; all proceeds go towards programs in Uganda for orphans, youth and women's development programs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47



DECO

MAHARISHI

NUDIE

PREP

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MCQUEEN

FULL CIRCLE

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**WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES**  
**FRANKLIN'S**  
**LOTS DANCE**  
**HEATH CMBROSIS**  
**SSIM**  
**ALL AGES**  
 1000's & 60  
  
**NEW CITY**  
 1000's & 60

**The Burnin' Santa Klaus**  
**OVER UNDER & THROUGH**  
  
**December 20th**  
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 \$15  
 AT 7PM  
 ADVANCE TIX  
 EARLY  
 DOORS  
 AT 7PM  
 1000's & 60  
**NEW CITY**  
 1000's & 60



## NEW YEARS EVE PARTY GUIDE

### WEST SALOON

50 Street, 476.3388  
New Year's Eve with Jo Hikk: midnight buffet and party favours; 7 pm  
Show at 9 pm

### WORLD WATERPARK

New Year's Eve Family Beach Party. Relax on the beach, listen to live  
by Out of the Blue and watch the fireworks display at midnight,  
party favours, fun games and great prizes  
tickets on sale at Guest Services or World Waterpark

### UNDERBAR HOFBRAUHAUS

101 Street, 436.5586  
Underbar Super Euro Techno Party: dance your face off techno party;  
to impress, dance all night long; 6 pm (door); catered food for early  
birds

### AFTERHOURS

8 - 102 Street, 994.3256, www.yafterhours.com  
007 Y Vs. Spy: Featuring a dance floor, and top DJs playing on mul-  
ti-floors; 10 pm-10 am; dress in your best secret agent attire; 18 +  
tickets: \$25 (adv); available at Foosh, Tree House Records, Under-  
ground, Yess Hair, and Y Afterhours

### YEAR ENDER BENDER

702.7295  
New Year's Pub Crawl: Edmonton Pub Crawls and 91.7 The Bounce  
present the Year Ender Bender Crawl  
Four Routes: Route 1 Hudsons Whyte; Route 2 Hudsons Downtown;  
Route 3 Hudsons Campus; Route 4 The Globe  
Tickets: \$30 (include a complementary drink at your starting location,  
VIP access to four different New Year's Eve Parties, a compli-  
mentary bottle of champagne and a New Year's Eve Countdown at your  
destination); tickets available at www.Edmontonpubcrawls.com,  
Master, Hudsons on Campus

### KYUK'S

Underderry Mall lower level, 6606 -137 Avenue, 481.9857  
Kelamis New Year's Eve (from the film *Almost Heaven*)  
Tickets: \$90 (includes buffet dinner, GST, party favours and champagne  
dinner); \$45 (includes show, party favours and glass of champagne);

## PHOTO CREDITS

Photography

FRANCIS TETRAULT

Photo Shoot Coordinator, Location Scout & Styling

RÉNÉE POIRIER

Hair & Makeup

PAMELA (VENUE HAIR ARTISANS)

Location

LUX STEAKHOUSE & BAR

Model

CARA & STEVE

Agency

MODE MODELS

Additional Styling

WARREN (HENRY) • STELLA (GRAVITY POPE)

DICKLY (HAIR ARTISANS) • ROB (HOLT RENTREWE)

Thanks to amanda and Paul for giving us their time and use of the Lux

VUEWEEKLY

# NYE Contest

Psssst... You could win 2 tickets to Fever's colossal  
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# Summer has the *Amazing Luck* of an effortlessly great cast

REVUE

TO SUN, DEC 17

## SUMMER OF MY AMAZING LUCK

DIRECTED BY BRADLEY MOSS

WRITTEN BY CHRIS CRADDOCK

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY MIRIAM TOEWS

STARRING BETH GRAHAM,

CAROLINE LIVINGSTONE, CHRIS CRADDOCK

ROXY THEATRE (10708 - 124 STREET), \$18 - \$25

*Summer of My Amazing Luck*—strikes me more as a feverish creation on some rehearsal stage than hunched craning over a keyboard. His plays seem almost too alive, too inherently tied to stage to exist in any meaningful written form, as if he's found a way to hone and shape improvising into something with the precision of drafting and redrafting.

He doesn't, of course, that I'm aware of, but the result is that his plays always pull at the heart of theatre: perhaps more than any other local playwright, I think it's impossible to appreciate theatre as an art form and not admire what Craddock does with it, regardless of your opinion of his themes or stories.

*Luck*, of course, is maybe the purest example of this (I personally prefer 3...2...1, but he doesn't try nearly the flash he employs here). While the main character/narrator Lucy (Beth Graham) pulls through the road-trip/life-on-welfare story, Craddock and Caroline Livingstone literally cre-

ate the world around her, employing a kitchen table and an endless supply of kids' toys to bring in antagonistic social workers, bombastic best friends, bickering neighbours and well-meaning suitors.

Nothing suffers the breakneck pace: Lucy's attempt to connect to her

distraught, distant father is as heartfelt as the self-censoring tirade against an anti-welfare MLA is hilarious. The large cast of surrounding characters is broad enough to be funny but realized enough to be sympathetic, encouraging almost as much pathos as Lucy without taking the

focus away from her story, either.

The ending is a little syrupy—though it's adapted, so I suppose that's no fault of Craddock's—but it seems irrelevant, too: the play is beautiful theatre, alive and effervescent with the medium, and top notch throughout. ♥



# Thomas tale brings a Welsh of holiday spirit

REVUE

TO DEC 16

## A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES

DIRECTED BY VIVIEN BOSLEY

WRITTEN BY DYLAN THOMAS, JEREMY BROOKS,

ADRIAN MITCHELL

STARRING ADRIAN LAHOLA, PETER McNAB,

JEANIE TIMMS, IAN CORRY AND OTHERS

WALTERDALE PLAYHOUSE (10322 - 83 AVENUE),

\$14 - \$18

Though the characters are clad in plaid outfits befitting to the 1950s, there is still something universal about them. The young Dylan, (Adrian Lahola) shells out his best performance and is quite charming in his role.

All of the characters seem to have a blast delivering their lines and being a part of this festive production, and Peter McNab (elder Dylan) sits off to the side and smiles as the characters run and sing about the stage with childish carelessness.

The cast often sings behind the stage's curtain for full vocal effects



when they are not on stage providing stellar supporting performances. Though this would be considered a musical, the songs are more like hymns than fully blown arranged carols, and the lyrics are far more comical

than what you may find at any church (a hymn about telling scary stories, or the mean boys around town, etc).

**LIKE ANY GOOD** Christmas tale, the Walterdale production is a good

reminder of all of the simple festive things that have been lost. After spending two years in a Muslim country where Christmas is unheard of, I was having a difficult time being home in Canada and remembering what the holidays felt like. Somehow, something was keeping me from getting out there in search of that Christmas joy, excitement and love that I used to possess in my soul.

All of the loving memories of past Christmases came back to me after seeing this delightful little play about *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. I was instantly transported back to my own childhood—my light, adventurous days where things were simpler, and seemed more focused on the family unit, less on consumerism.

It will delight anyone with a hint of Christmas spirit who attends, and a feeling of fond memories of the season will reside in you for days to come, bringing forth the innocent thoughts of goodwill and peace that reside somewhere in all of us. ♥



# Mostly Water's XXXMas 2 is quite refreshingly crude—most of the time

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Sketch comedy is probably one of the hardest acts to pull off, because it's such a muddled medium; not properly storytelling, but neither the unbridled joke-a-thon of stand-up, it exists somewhere in the middle, a quick-hit story that must be funny as often as possible.

It's a hell of a tricky tightrope—endless exposition is never necessarily funny, and rapid fire jokes can lose luster quick—and one that Mostly Water Theatre's (Craig Buchert, Matt Stanton, Sam Varteniuk and Trent Wilkie) latest show, *XXXMas 2: Falalalala-lala-luck off*, doesn't always walk so gracefully.

There is no question that they've got the latter half of the equation down: a skit like show-closer "Shit! It Sucked!," which allows the foursome to riff on the aforementioned phrase, is a perfect example of the group's ample comedic gifts. Refreshingly crude, healthily absurd and with a rolling, drumbeat rhythm, they jump from performer to performer, rarely missing a moment of funny. It's the sketch part of the comedy that's hit-and-miss.

Too many skits in this collection—which is, to be fair, the weakest of the three shows that I've seen so far—seem like nothing more than attempts to stuff as many absurd comedy bits into one sketch as possible. It's an admirable goal and hilarious when it works, but it seldom does: comedy is almost always funnier when it's honest to the situation, and while an absurd aside can be brilliant when used right—as it is in "La French Scene Lá," a hilarious mangling of Québécois—with too much time as the main feature, it gets tired. "Farmer Jarmer's Crackin' Christmas," which plays as an endless series of shots at country folk, or



PREVIEW

TO SAT, DEC 16

## XXXMAS 2: FALALALALA-LALA-LUCK OFF

DIRECTED BY DAVID DEGAGNÉ

WRITTEN BY & STARRING CRAIG BUCHERT, MATT STANTON, SAM VARTENIUK, TRENT WILKIE  
PLANET ZE DESIGN STUDIO (10055-80 AVENUE), \$12-\$15

"Fat Back," which sticks together two altogether ridiculous ideas in such a way that diminishes them both, are probably the worst offenders, too scattershot to ever get really funny.

GENERALLY, THE FINEST SKITS are also the ones with the best overall story: "Great Ideas," with the group attempting to write new skits, gets funnier as they bounce more and more ridiculous ideas off each other, and "Not Doing Anything" takes an interesting

theatrical conceit—time jumps, that is—to fully hilarious effect. The stand-out piece, though, might be video montage "Film Gifts," with each cast member giving a present to the family in the form of a short clip: here, the characters are fully realized, and the comedy is purely motivated in the story, resulting in something that doesn't miss a single beat.

And while the skits that hit are certainly more than enough to leave you with a good taste in your mouth, they emphasize the fact that the ones that don't aren't so much bad as wasted, which seems more disappointing.

Mostly Water is capable of some sharp, hilarious comedy, and when they can tune their narrative abilities to the frequency of their humour, there's not going to be much down time. They're just not quite there yet. ▼

## With Mitzi at the helm, Minsky gets to say 'put me in coach'

DIE-NASTY

### DIRTY LAUNDRY

JOEL SEMCHUK

dirtylaundry@vuweekly.com

Dr Bueno Excellente's working on a new product: LSD combined with the pill so you can "Take a trip without the kids." Jamie-Majors Capilano is thrilled to death that her husband nearly killed for her, Laurel Canyon is organizing a sausage party, and since Mitzi's promotion, Minsky is now cuddling with the coach ... something he hasn't done since the minors.

That's right! Mitzi Doobie is now coach of the Edmonton Die-Hards, so she informed her husband Rollie that he would now be staying at home looking after the eventual kids while she went

out and earned.

Rollie had just stumbled home after being stabbed. While Dr Excellente studied up on stab wounds, Rollie liberally applied cocaine to the fondue fork sticking out of him, and then Doris Excellente showed up and removed it; she needed it for her fondue party.

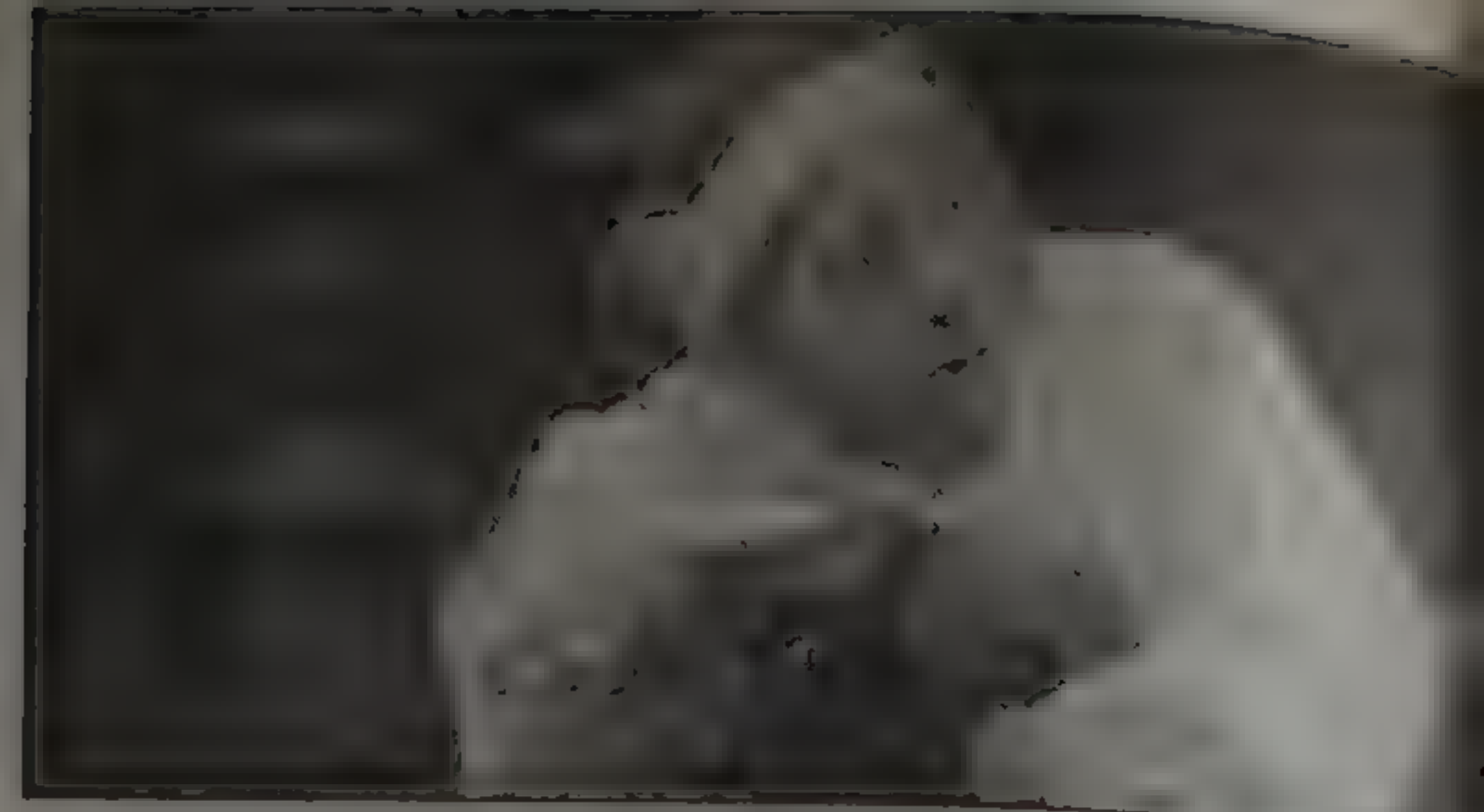
Mitzi kept the Die-Hards on a strict regiment of hand-fed breakfasts and ballet, but the Vancouver Canucks beat the Die-Hards easily, 3-1. Oddly, during the game Minsky made a date with Vancouver Canucks player Bud Chronicowski, and Chronicowski left the net wide open—apparently for Minsky, but Capilano scored. Minsky and Bud had been seen working out together and were heard sharing deep thoughts. Too bad the game ended with Minsky beating the living hell out of Chronicowski and

the ref.

After the game, reporter Stubby Woods was at odds with himself. The writing was on the wall: the unsportsmanlike conduct call against Minsky 0.25 seconds into the game; Vancouver's multiple penalty shots; Minsky's cancelled goals; the ref pushing the puck into the net ... was the game fixed? Stubby's bigger question: did he even care?

Diane figures her new coach needed a tongue lashing, somewhat different from the one she gave Chronicowski, but new Coach Mitzi held up quite well to Diane's invective. Mitzi simply informed Diane that if the team didn't win, well, Diane would just have to invest in better players.

Next week the Die-Hards face the Calgary Flames. ▼



## Citadel's A Christmas Carol never fails to enthrall audiences

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuweekly.com

Many of us media types have given up on reviewing what has become an Edmonton tradition over the last seven seasons.

What more can you say about the Citadel's annual production of *A Christmas Carol*, about Tom Wood's wonderfully textured turn as the quintessential grouchy Scrooge that hasn't been said already?

Heading down to the theatre the other night, I asked myself that very question. But it was also tangled up in the stress of the kazillion things that still needed to get done at work to get the paper out, the fact that I hadn't yet sent off a Christmas package to my family back east and that there was no way I was going to make it to the gym. In short, I just wasn't feeling it.

But once the production began, once the eerie opening scene of Jacob Marley's funeral crept over the audience, I was reminded of the many aspects to Dickens's story that have made it such a classic.

Thankfully, under Bob Baker's direction, the cast and crew haven't forgotten some of these very important elements.

OFTEN, WE THINK of *A Christmas Carol* as a touchy-feely sentimental tale, but it is so much more. Even though I, like many others, could rattle off the key elements of the story to anyone who asked (Scrooge is this miserly dude who gets a visit from four different ghosts who remind him of the spirit of Christmas), I am always taken aback by how much of a ghost story the tale really is.

Set and costume designer Leslie Frankish, however, is in her element with this fact. She offers a wonderful sense of stage magic in every production she has a hand in, and this one is no different. Ghosts fly and door knockers talk, costumes light up and fake snow drifts down from the rafters.

Tom Wood, who adapted Dickens's tale, of course hasn't forgotten the eeriness of it all either. And even though he has been playing this role for years, he never fails to startle the audience or himself with the action on stage. When the ominous Ghost

REVUE

TO SAT, DEC 23

### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

DIRECTED BY BOB BAKER

ADAPTED BY TOM WOOD

STARRING WOOD, JULIEN ARNOUD

APRIL BANIGAN, JAN ALLEN

ELIJAH JOHNSON

MACLAB THEATRE (9828-101 AVE)

\$55-\$80

of Christmas Future I ... ly over him, it is impossible to deny the delight in his palpable fear.

Even better than the fact that Wood doesn't make Scrooge a one-note perpetually crank. That may sound petty to say, but he injects enough pathos in the beginning that we have an inkling of Cratchit (Julien Arnaud), Fred (Ryland Allen), and the curmudgeon that we also have no trouble relating to with the giddy changed.

But hey, I'm not telling you that you don't know it right? We all know that it's over the cash for the show suitably entertained by the cast and crew.

And I guess that I don't have to tell you that when I walked out of the theatre, my own level of stress noticeably reduced. Yes, many, many things to do on the list, but I was given the wonderful reminder that certain things are worth worrying about in the end of things. And that's my story. We all slow down, to enjoy family and friends, and ourselves to death.

But what I really enjoyed was the production of *A Christmas Carol*, an integral role in Edmonton's theatre scene. This production is the first piece of the puzzle exposed to. Parents and children without tears of happiness going on a trip. There is just so much going on stage with traditional sets that even the most jaded audience member beside me gasped with excitement.

And these are the years that enthrall audiences and inspire individuals to go and explore our city's rich tapestry of theatre. Amen to that. ▼





Once upon a time, in an auditorium close by ...

WIZARD FILE / sherry@vancouverweekly.com

... Prince, The Nutcracker Prince is in a ... shop in Calgary, waiting for ... brew.

... [Dala]'s a wizard!" he says, talking on ... phone. "One of the best conductors I've ... for. He's conscientious about what ... his need—he knows which Prince is ... g and how the choreography differs ... or each one."

... While, Alexis Maragozis the Snow ... sits at her computer in Calgary and ... an email north to Devon, where ... es are gently swirling down onto the ... making all the cars get stuck. But the ... ws come out and fight through the ... , like the toy soldiers who would soon ... o fight the Mouse King and his army a ... ater, further north in Edmonton.

... puts so much passion and love into his ... ing, and he's really supportive of the ... Alexis writes. "When you are out on ... u can feel how attentive he is to both ... tians and the dancers."

... himself has only wonderful things to ... t his work with the Snow Queen, the ... r Prince and their entourage at Alber-

... a music conductor who could have ... anywhere in the world, but he chose

... the best job in the world," he says, ... it isn't trade it with anyone!"

... the Prince always travels to the ... t forest where he conducts the ... ic for *The Nutcracker* ballet.

... WIZARD has stopped in Vancouver on ... o the Enchanted Forest one day, and he

PREVIEW

FRI, DEC 15 - SUN, DEC 17  
**THE NUTCRACKER**  
BY ALBERTA BALLET  
JUBILEE AUDITORIUM, \$33.25 - \$84.25

tells this story over the phone

Tchaikovsky was in a little shop in Paris when he discovered the celeste, a musical instrument that audiences had never heard before.

"It sounds so sweet and heavenly," Tchaikovsky said, "and it would be perfect for The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy!"

(The Sugar Plum Fairy doesn't look like a plum because she isn't round—she's light and airy and beautiful, and that's why Tchaikovsky chose the celeste for her music.)

"But, oh dear," he thought, "I can't tell Rimsky-Korsakov or Glazinov about this! I must be the first composer ever to present music written for the celeste!"

Tchaikovsky guarded his secret so carefully that finally, one day he was the first to present music created especially for the celeste

That was over a hundred years ago, and it was such beautiful music that it's very famous now, and so is *The Nutcracker* ballet.

Peter says *The Nutcracker* is the first ballet many people ever see, and they like it so much that they go see Alberta Ballet more often after that.

Often children will peak into the orchestra pit during the intermission, Peter says, where they see him preparing to conduct the orchestra. And this makes him happy because he loves seeing children at the ballet for the first time. Sometimes the Wizard even waves at them. ▼

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2006-2007

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Richard Sparks, conductor

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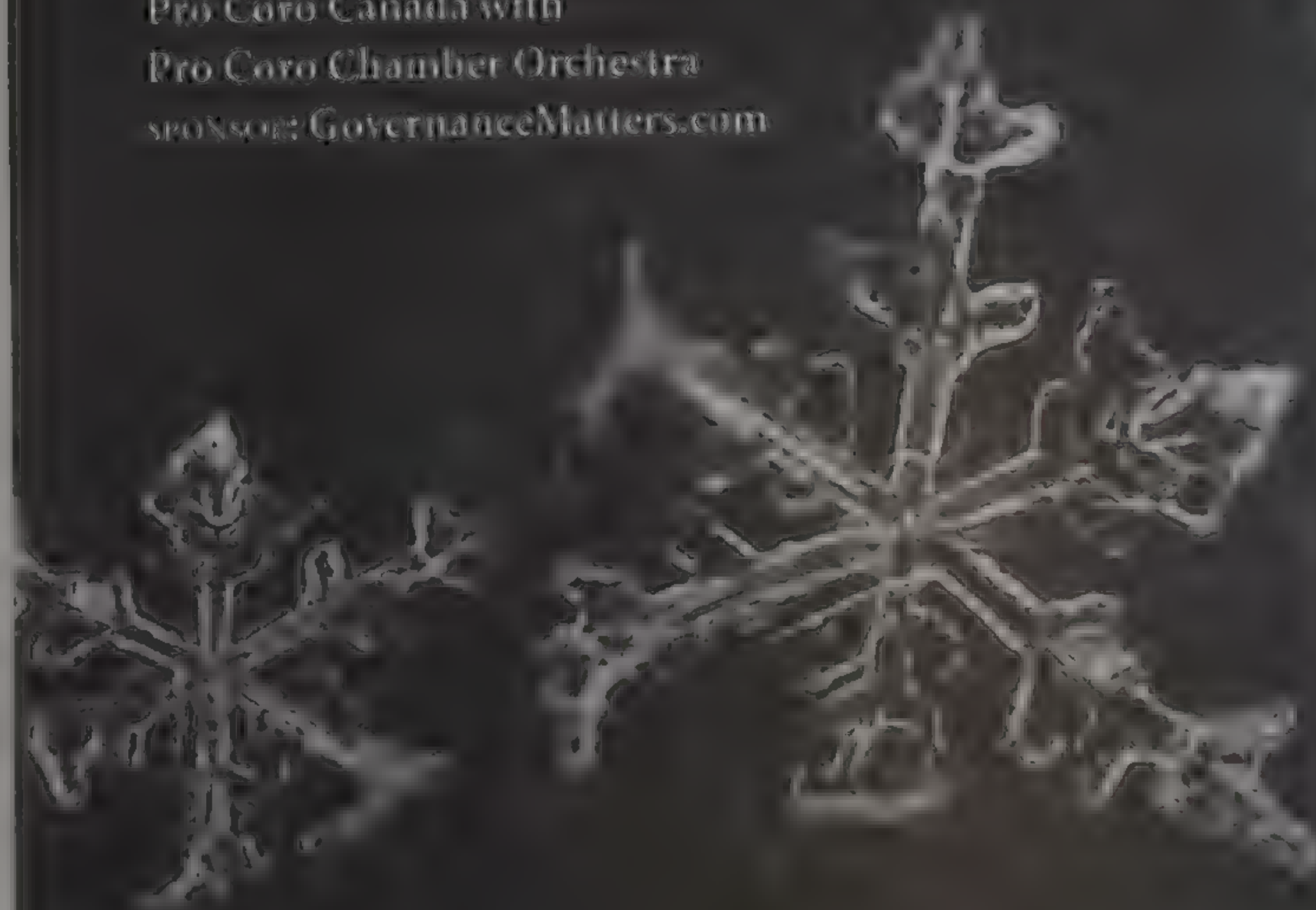
Winspear Centre for Music  
Richard Sparks, conductor

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Richard Sparks, conductor  
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## DANCE

**ALBERTA BALLET—THE NUTCRACKER** Jubilee Auditorium 11455-87 Ave (427-2760/451-8000) • Presented by Alberta Ballet and Ballet British Columbia, choreography by Mikko Nissinen, with Tchaikovsky's score • Dec. 15-16 (7:30pm), Dec. 16-17 (2pm) at TicketMaster

**DANCE MOVES** (at the Food Bank) 11455-87 Ave (427-2760/451-8000) • Dance Moves for all ages and abilities • Dec. 18 (7-9:30pm) • Donation to the Food Bank

**UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS SHOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN SWANS OF CHRISTMAS** (at the Food Bank) 11455-87 Ave (427-2760/451-8000) • Directed by Viktor Lytvynov, composed by Bronyslav Pavlosky. Grimm Brothers' classic fairy tale featuring Edmonton's Ukrainian Shumka Dancers with the Ukraine's Kyiv Ballet • Until Dec. 17 • Tickets available at the Citadel Theatre box office

## GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

**AGNES BUGERA GALLERY** 12310 Jasper Ave (482-2854) • **SMALL WORKS—SHORTBREAD AND SHERRY** Small artworks by gallery artists, until Dec. 23

**ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY** 10186 106 St (488-6611) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **OPERA COAT PROJECT** The grandeur, diversity and complexity of opera captured in wearable art coats, until Dec. 16

**ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA 2** Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed-Fri 10:30am-8pm, Thu 10:30am-5pm, Sat-Sun 11am-5pm • **FREE FOR ALL** As we count down to the last days in the current gallery building, we want to go out with a festive bang. Free For All is a celebration of Edmonton artistic creativity and a chance for everyone to show-off at the AGA. We invite professional artists, amateur artists, emerging artists, has-been artists, nascent artists, Sunday artists, their mothers and everyone to exhibit at one of Canada's most important venues for contemporary art, until Dec. 31 • **CONTEMPORARY INUIT ART** Film/video/drawing; **ISUMA TO HAVE AN IDEA** presents a survey exhibition of contemporary Inuit film and video by Igloolik isuma Productions, Canada's first Inuit independent film production company, **ASHOONA THIRD WAVE** features new work by Shuvina Ashoona, Siasse Kenneally and Annie Pootoogook, **Ashoona Third Wave** represents a tradition of art-making that spans three generations, until Feb. 19, 2007 • **FAR AND WIDE** Alberta landscapes by David Alexander and John McEwen, until Dec. 22 • **Edmonton artists**, Scott Berry, Louis O. Colley and Leo Wong, until Feb. 19, 2007 • **ART BAR** Open Dec. 14, 21, 28 (4:30pm) • **Children's Gallery** **ALPHABET SOUP** incorporating illustrations by Lorna Bennet, through 2006

**ARTISTS OPEN STUDIO** 7711-85 St (586-0789) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 10am-5pm • Paintings by the Alberta Oil Painters group • Until Dec. 31

**ART MODE GALLERY** 12220 Jasper Ave (453-1555) • **ART IN MINIATURE** Various artists featuring small artworks from petite paintings to small sculptures, until Dec. 24 • New artworks by Robert Roy and Sylvie Brunet, Dec. 14-17

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**FAB GALLERY** Rm 1-1 Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 2-5pm • **PAINTING IN ITALY: A VISUAL DIARY** Studies from museum artifacts and from on-location in Italy are presented unframed for critiques. Photographs and presentation show the students' interests and document the locations they painted • **SCIENCE=MAGIC** Ike Bushman's final visual presentation for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking, until Dec. 23

**FRINGE GALLERY** 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Digital artworks by Ansgard Thompson • Until Dec. 30

**GALLERY AT MILLER STADIUM & WILSON LIBRARY** 111 St, Sir Winston Churchill Sq (496-7030) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 1-5pm • **CANADIAN CHILDREN'S BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS** The CANSCAP Collection, until Dec. 30

**HARCOURT HOUSE** 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 12-4pm • **COWBOYS AND INDIANS (AND MÉTIS?)** Paintings by David Gameau that explore the identity, representations, and meanings of being Métis, until Dec. 23 • **Front Room: RUNNING THROUGH FLAMES, AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY PECULIARITIES** Paul Smith's mixed media artworks feature a trickster figure and connect to mythology and pop culture, until Dec. 23

**JEFF ALLEN GALLERY** Strathcona Place, 10831 University Ave (433-5282) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • **CHRISTMAS SHOW AND SALE** Artworks by previous exhibitors featuring a variety of styles and mediums • Until Jan. 4

**JOHNSON GALLERY (NORTH)** 11817-80 St (479-8424) Open Tue-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm, Sat 9:30am-4pm • **CHRISTMAS ART FAIR** Artworks by gallery artists as well as invited artists • Through December • **(SOUTH)** 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 10am-5pm • **CHRISTMAS ART FAIR** Artworks by Jim Painter, Jim Brager, Wendy Risdale, prints by Toti, ceramic art by Heather Goldmine, potter by Noburo Kubo • Through December

**LANDO GALLERY** 11130-105 Ave (990-1161) • Artworks by Tslila Barzel, and Eric Fredine, until Dec. 22 • **FROZEN IN TIME** Photographs by Michael Levin • **HORIZONS** New photographs by Eric Fredine • **THE TREE OF LIFE** Paintings by Tslila Barzel • Until Dec. 22

**LATITUDE 53 GALLERY** 10248-106 St (423-5353) • **FROST 2006—DECK THE HALLS** Innovative and original products by designers showing various aspects of design from the graphics to accessories as well as the relationship of the product to the user • Until Dec. 16 • Closing reception and silent auction Sat, Dec. 16 (7-11pm) featuring DJ Shortee

**LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY** Spruce Grove • **CHRISTMAS IN THE LITTLE CHURCH** Until Dec. 23

**LOST LOST LOST GALLERY** 11130-105 Ave (990-1161) • Artworks by Tslila Barzel, and Eric Fredine, until Dec. 22 • **FROZEN IN TIME** Photographs by Michael Levin • **HORIZONS** New photographs by Eric Fredine • **THE TREE OF LIFE** Paintings by Tslila Barzel • Until Dec. 22

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**MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM** St. Albert Place, 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • **WITHIN GROWLING DISTANCE** Learn about the data collection to analysis of grizzly bear research • Until Jan. 14, 2007

**NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS** Stollery Gallery, 9702-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-2:30pm, Tue 6:30-8:30pm, Thu 6:30pm • **JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS—PRINTS, POTTERY AND PAPER** New artworks by Nina Haggerty studio artists • Until Dec. 14 • **Wrap It Up Party:** Prints, Pottery and Paper; Thu, Dec. 14 (2-6pm)

**PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY (VANDERBILT GALLERY)** 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm Thu 10am-8pm • Group show featuring new landscapes by Gregory Hardy, until Dec. 14 • Abstracts on mylar by Frances Thomas and fantastic landscapes by Robert Wiseman, Dec. 16-Jan. 14, opening reception Sat, Dec. 16 (2-4pm), artists in attendance

**PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-8pm) • **PRESENCE** Artworks by members of various St. Albert arts groups, Dec. 7-30, opening reception, with DBA Light Up December 7 (7-9pm) • ArtVentures, Dec. 16, 6-12 year-olds, \$2/child • Drop-in Art for the Artist at Heart, Dec. 14, Jan. 4

**PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA** 8555 Roper Rd • **A JOYFUL HARVEST** A photo exhibit from the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta salutes the people, places and organizations that have defined Jewish life in southern Alberta since 1889 • Until Jan. 25

**REMEDY CAFÉ** 8631-109 St (433-3096) • Artworks created by the iHuman Youth • Dec. 14 (starting 4pm) • Donations appreciated

**ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM** 10000-130 Ave (462-5800) • **THE BUILDER—PROJECT, BUILD IT** Learning through constructive play, until Jan. 28, 2007 • **LEGO OCEAN ADVENTURE** Create your own sea creatures and learn about the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research with the logger-head turtle. Until Jan. 28, 2007 • **IMAGES IN PLATINUM OF WESTERN CANADA'S NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL PARKS** Photographs of Western Canadian parks, from the Rocky Mountains and beyond by Allan King, until Jan. 14

**SCOTT GALLERY** 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **CHRISTMAS TREASURES** Group show featuring new paintings by Vladimir Horik, Katerina Mertikas, Lynn Malin Harold Feist, sculptor by David Mitchell, pottery by Carol and Richard Selfridge and still life by Linda O'Neill, until Dec. 23 • **20TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION** Artworks by gallery artists such as Doug Haynes, Vladimir Horik, Francine Gravel, Leslie Poole and Robert Sinclair as well as Jim Davies and Akiko Taniguchi, until Dec. 23

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**VAAA GALLERY** 3rd Fl. Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-4pm, Sat 12-4pm • **SPECTRAUM** Artworks by Lundy Dale, Pam Weber, and Thaneah Krohn • Until Dec. 23

**WALTERDALE PLAYHOUSE** Lobby, 10322-83 Ave (432-7357) • **Art in the Lobby:** Gouache on paper and acrylic on canvas by Will Kozub, in conjunction with *A Child's Christmas in Wales* • Until Dec. 16, viewing one hour before curtain

## LITERARY

**BLUE CHAIN CAFÉ** 9624-76 Ave (469-8755) • Story Slam. An opportunity for writers to share their work, explore their talents and show off • Third Wed each month • \$5 (donation) • Wed, 8:30-10

**CASTLE ROCK PUB** 570 St. Albert Road • Poet's Ink. Writing evenings every Sunday (7-9pm) except long weekends, holidays and summer months • Dec. 10, taking a holiday break and returning Jan. 7, 2007

**CITY ARTS CENTRE** 10943-84 Ave (433-2932) • **T.A.L.E.S.** monthly Storytelling Circle. Tell stories or come to listen • Second Fri of each month (8-10pm) • \$3 (first time free)

**COLES** Southgate Mall • Book signing by Bruce Atchison, author of *When a Man Loves a Rabbit (Learning and Living With Bunnies)* • Dec. 11 (1-5pm)

**HULBERT'S CAFÉ** 7601-115 St • The Olive Reading Series • 2nd Tue each month • Tue, Dec. 12 (7pm) Sharon Thesen, open set to follow • No cover

**NAKED CYBER CAFÉ** 10354 Jasper Ave • Music, poetry, and performance art open stage hosted by the Naked Eclectic Electric Orchestra • Every Thu (8pm)

**ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL** 10475-80 Ave (433-2932) • **Story Café, T.A.L.E.S.** • First Thu of ea month, through to June (7-9pm) • \$5 • Perfect Gifts. featuring storytellers Stephanie Bengel, Bethany Ellis, and Renee Englot, Thu, Dec. 7 (7-9pm), \$5

**UPPER CRUST BISTRO** 10909-86 Ave • Stroll of Poets Poets' Haven. Reading series is an opportunity for poetry enthusiasts to enjoy poetry in an intimate café setting every Mon night, through to Mar (7-9pm) • \$5 (door, incl. coffee, tea and poetry) • Featuring Geraldine Matus, Connie Lloyd, Jessica Brandt, and Danielle Zyp, Dec. 11 • Featuring Capri Anton, Hugh McAlary, Tim Cusack, and Glen Kirkland, Dec. 18

**UPPER CRUST BISTRO** The Sitting Room, 10909-86 Ave (422-8174) [www.writersguild.ca](http://www.writersguild.ca) • The Writers Guild of Alberta presents 'Twas the Member Night Before Christmas featuring storyteller Gail de Vos and a holiday open mic • Dec. 13 (7pm) • Free (WGA member/\$5 (non-member)

**VICTORIA SCHOOL** Eva O Howard Theatre (420-1757) • CBC's readings from Dicken's *Christmas Carol* • Mon, Dec. 11 (7pm) • \$10/free (child 12 and under) available at TIX on the Square

**YOGA LOFT** 10309 Whyte Ave, 2nd Fl • *Geha* Suli poetry (Rumi, Hafiz, Meera Bai, Kabir) and dance with members of the U of A Ethnomusicology ensembles • Sat, Dec. 9 (8pm) • \$12/\$10 (adv. at the Yoga Loft)

## LIVE COMEDY

**THE COMEDY FACTORY** 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu 8:30pm, Fri 8:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Jason Blanchard, Dec. 7-9 • David Gray, Dec. 14-16 • Leif skyving Dec. 21-23, Bob Beddow, Dec. 28-30

**THE COMIC STRIP** 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St (483-5999) • Open, nightly 8pm, Fri 8pm and 10:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm, Sun 8pm • JR Brow from *Comedy Central* and the *Late Late Show*, with Welby Santos, Lars Callieou, and Rick Bronson; Thu, Dec. 7-10 • Hit or Miss Monday's Mon, Dec. 11 • Alternative Comedy Night. Featuring comedy hypnotism, comedy magic, comedy music, street performers and more, Tue Dec 12 • JR Brow from *Comedy Central* and the *Late Late Show* with Nigel Lawrence and Paul Brown, Dec. 13-17 • Hit or Miss Monday's Mon, Dec. 18 • The Merry #5% & 1 Christmas Show Starring *Last Comic Standing's* Rich Vos, Bonnie McFarlane and Rob Pue. This XXX Show will turn your holiday blahs into holiday HA's, Tue, Dec. 19-Wed, Dec. 20 • Rob Pue, hit of the *Just for Laughs* festival and star of TV's *Punk'd*, with Andrew Iwaniak, Shawn Gramiak and Kelly Soloduka, Dec. 21-23 • Rob Pue from the TV show *Punk'd*. Also Lars Callieou and Sean Thompson, Tue, Dec. 26-30

**SIDETRACK CAFÉ** 10238-104 St • Kokanee Comedy Battle hosted by Kathleen McGee featuring local and touring comics every Thu (9:30pm), \$3 (door) • Sunday Night with dj dudeman The Comedy Factory Sunday Night Comedy Show with

Rattpoison, 8pm, Dec. 14, 21

**YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABARET** 5000-111 St (469-8755) • Night, \$10 • Auggie Smith, 1 Lecomber, Leclan Pattero

## THEATRE

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**THE CHRISTMAS CAROL PROJECT** • Singer-songwriter musical of *Christmas Carol* • Dec. 11-12 • TIX on the Square

**CRIMES OF THE HEART** Campus (420-1757/492-22) • Henley, directed by Kim Henley, the three Magrath sisters confront the youngest, Babe, who n't like his looks • Until Dec. 9 (8pm) (12:30pm) • \$8/\$20 at TicketMaster (hour prior to performance), TIX on the Square

**DIE-NASTY** Varscona Theatre 10111-101 Ave (469-8755) • hilarious, live, improvised • 10:30pm • \$10 (door)

**THE GERRY STEINFELD SHOW** 8882-170 Street WEM (484-1494)

**THE GOLDEN AGE ROCKS ON!** 771-9804 • By Will Mar • the '50s and early '60s • 10:30pm

**OH SUSANNA! CHRISTMAS SPECIAL** 10329-83 Ave • The Patchouli hosts the celebration of the Yuletide. Ha Love and the Compania • 10:30pm • Sat Dec 16 (11pm)

**OFFENSIVE TALKS** Winston Churchill Sq (420-1757/492-22) • An engaging, funny and thought-provoking play by David interacial dating, racism, violence and tolerance seen the eyes of a high school couple • Dec. 8-9pm (7:30pm) • \$16 (adult)/\$12 (student)

**PEPPERMINT SCHMICK** Jekyll and Hyde Pub (433-1111) • humorous musical revue from Swak Productions • Dec. 14-16 (8pm) • \$4 (door)

**THE SOUND OF MUSIC** Festival Place 100 Terry Sherwood Park (449-337/451-8000) • Jon Maitland's Vortraips for classic tunes in this classic musical • 21-Jan. 6 (not incl. hols) (child, 12 and under) at Festival Place box office

**THE SUMMER OF MY SOUL** 124 St • Theatre Nel • novel by Miriam T. • 10:30pm • 14-16 (8pm) • \$1 (door)

**THE SUMMER OF MY SOUL** Centre 10055 • by Mostly Water II • 14-16 (8pm) • \$1 (door)

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# the Bushman questions blind faith in *Science = Magik*

REVUE

TO DEC 23

SCIENCE = MAGIK

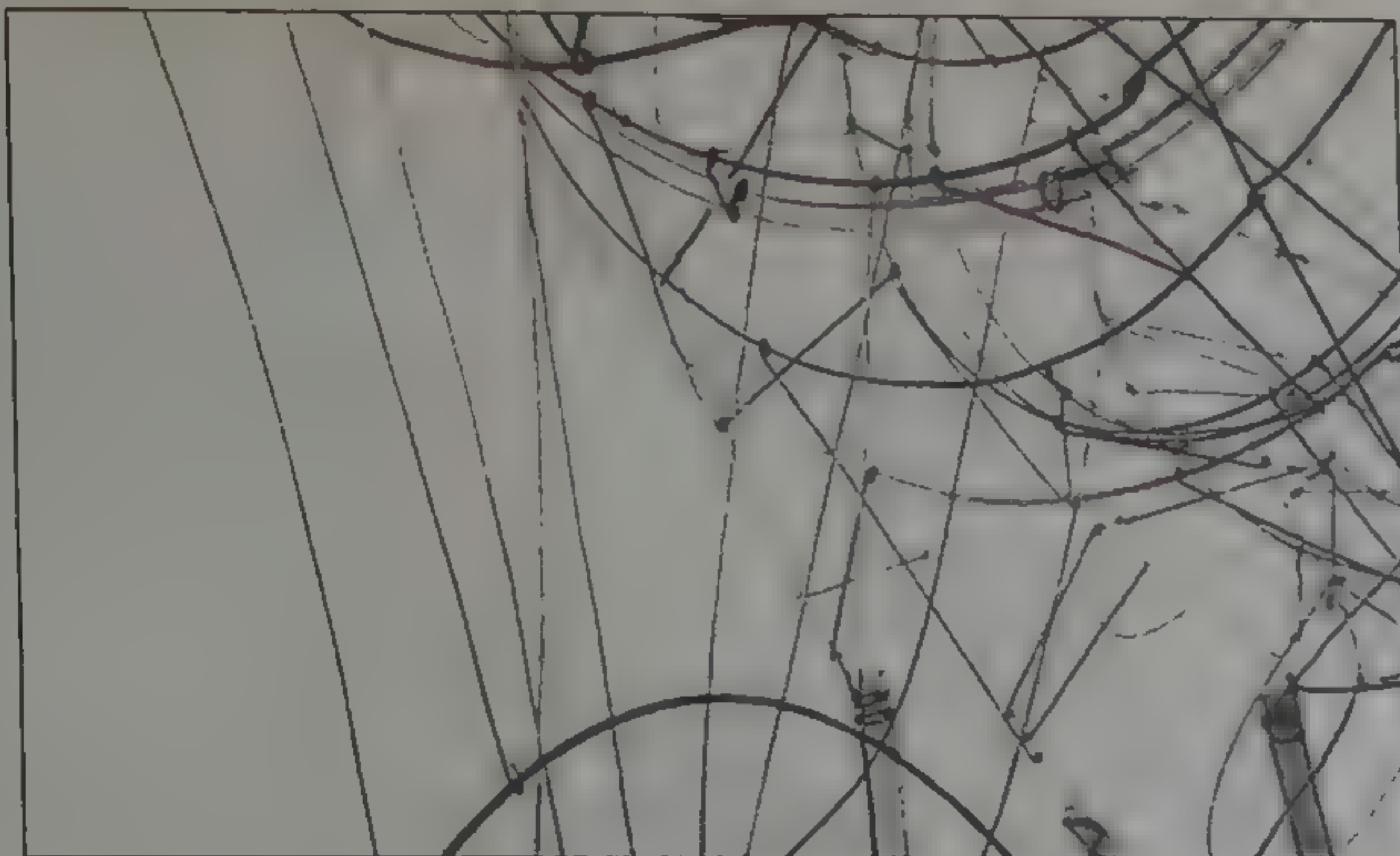
BY THE BUSHMAN

FAB GALLERY (U OF A FINE ARTS BUILDING)

matic; it is axiomatic, and there is a nuance between those terms that is deliberately not captured by the credulous. The difference is that evidence impacts the beliefs of the rational, while it does little to move the faithful.

The myth of the "arrogant scientist" is one of the doozies of our age. For every Lysenko-esque scientific abuse of power, there are handfuls more Ted Haggards (virtually all of the big evangelical names in the US have been scandal-ridden). The ironies are varied and profuse, and the perversity of the whole thing is that the credulous are the only ones who believe that secularization is winning.

Believing in the technological is simply not the same as believing in



science.

We are meaning-seeking creatures, and Bushman's pieces exploit that. Looking at his large-ish square works, these fabulously layered textures and

forms created with an array of print-making techniques, we see worlds both micro and macro. They could be based on the smallest level, set inside a cell or even a quantum scale. Or

they could be the grandest structures of the universe

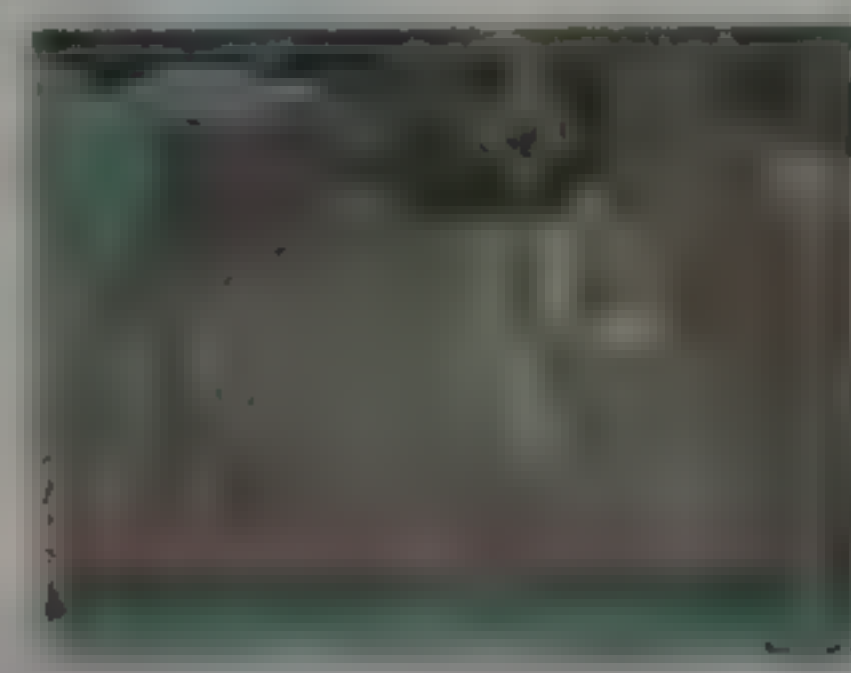
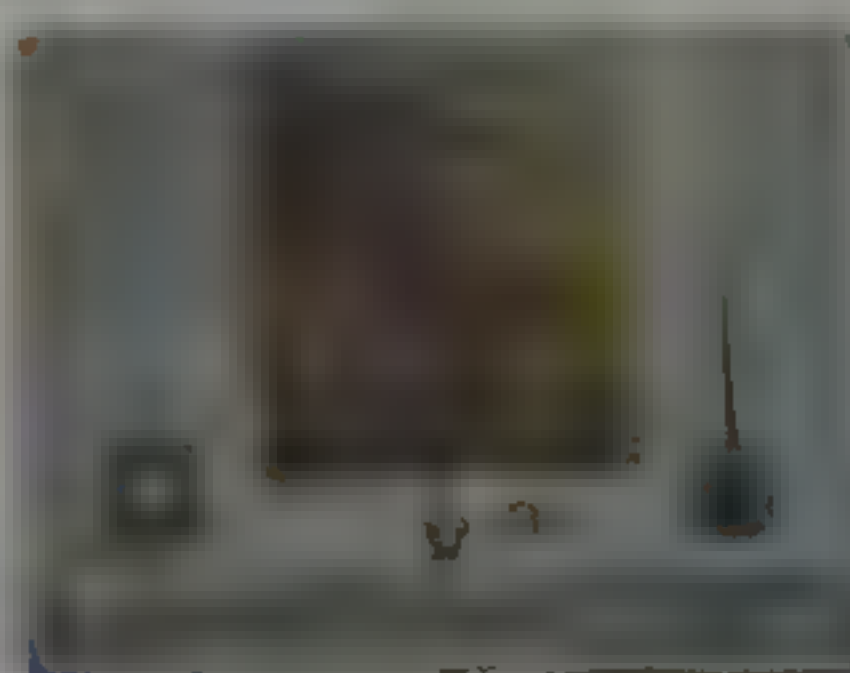
But they are neither. Instead, Bushman arrived at the forms as a deconstruction of loopy tags in public places done by urban artists, which he was led to through his love of abstract expressionism

In his studio, he started translating some of the curves and lines and connections into three dimensions, and one of these working models is the showstopper: a graceful, delightful sculpture suspended from the ceiling.

An odd combination of light and material makes it seem both alien and organic, and it has an iridescent aura like a shoal of silvery fish. Geometric whorls and concentric megaphones create a shadow play on the wall, suggesting a darker world beneath this one. You can see the whole show in it, each perspective a window into a world of belief. ▽

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# You do a lot of bawling when you're *Riding Alone*

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuwweekly.com

“Once the mask is on,” a character tells us in *Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles*, “it doesn’t matter who is behind it.” A literal mask is being referred to here, but the mask we’re really concerned with is that of Gou-ichi Takata (Ken Takakura), the stony-faced father who journeys to China to complete a documentary project for his gravely ill son confined to a Tokyo hospital bed.



THIS IS OK

Takata’s collar is usually turned up, his cap pulled down low. “I’m not too good with people,” he confesses. He doesn’t like to speak, and when he does he says the wrong things. When he desperately needs to express something to others, he does so by recording his plea on videotape, which, in one of the film’s more curious bits of social observation, seems to affect its listeners more deeply than any face-to-face statement could have.

Not at all the sort of cinematic meditation the title seems to imply, *Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles* is a colourful road movie about conflicts between the instincts of the heart to love and communicate and the social barriers that restrict modern communication to largely generalized gestures that rarely penetrate the surface. What is to say it’s mostly about men learning how to open up and talk



DRAMA

FRI, DEC 15 & SUN, DEC 17 (9 PM);  
SAT, DEC 16 & MON, DEC 18 (7 PM)  
**RIDING ALONE FOR  
THOUSANDS OF MILES**  
DIRECTED BY ZHANG YIMOU  
WRITTEN BY ZHANG, JINGZHI ZOU  
STARRING KEN TAKAKURA, SHINOBU TERAJIMA,  
KIICHI NAKAI, JIAMIN LI  
METRO CINEMA, \$8

about their feelings, especially the

seemingly toughest, most remote men, which, in the world of this particular movie, means Japanese guys and guys in jail.

**THIS TALE OF** parallel estranged fathers and sons, of disparate urban and rural worlds, finds director/co-writer Zhang Yimou stepping back from the grandiose, painterly spectacles of *Hero* and *House of Flying Dag-*

gers to return to the sentimental neo-realist style of earlier films such as *Not One Less*.

In unabashedly praising the virtues of community over solitude, Zhang pays a rosy homage to Chinese village life and openly courts cliché in plot, dialogue and the characterization of his Japanese protagonist as emotionally reserved. It’s simplistic but frequently charming, excessively

sentimental but genuinely heartfelt, which I guess makes it appropriate holiday programming for those who can’t stomach *Love and Nancy Myers*.

Takakura’s contained performance and the basic human themes are forced together with a wholly extraneous and buckets of tears (not to mention boogers—Zhang really likes these fellas a-bawling). But the film does eventually strike a pleasant balance of sugary cuteness with feeling. Subtlety is in short supply but sincerity and panache make for a lot.

Really, the best moments come when Zhang and the gang get healthy doses of humour intruding on the heavy emoting. Takata spends time in a small mountain village where he’s treated with great kindness while dealing with town committees and a municipal feast in which an entire table snakes its way down the narrow central avenue.

These are scenes that arise from character as much as story. They breathe a little more naturalism than the ones that conform to the dictates of Zhang’s style. In short, it’s when humans, in all their spontaneity and emotional whimsy, truly take control of *Riding Alone* that the film finally earns the right to be called human.

## Director Guest’s inherent bitterness is up For Your Consideration

FLICKS

**THE MOVIEGOER**

PAUL MATTHEWS  
moviegoer@vuwweekly.com

Christopher Guest is the only director in Hollywood who’s given Catherine O’Hara the starring roles she so richly deserves. But even that fact isn’t enough to redeem *For Your Consideration*, a truly awful Hollywood satire on the level of Joe Eszterhas’ *Burn Hollywood Burn!*

Guest literally seems to have poured every ounce of comic imagination into designing the characters’ hairstyles, from the thinning Caesar cut of Eugene Levy’s agent to the idiotic blond fauxhawk of Fred Willard’s TV host. This movie is a disaster, at once feeble and mean-spirited—so much so that, for the first time, I’m not looking forward to the next Christopher Guest comedy. Actually, I’m kind of dreading it.

I adore *Best in Show* and *Waiting for Guffman* (*A Mighty Wind* I’m ambivalent about), but I’ve always loathed the way

they end. Both *Best* and *Guffman* deal with ordinary people trying to succeed in some neglected corner of showbiz—an amateur musical, a dog show. At first, the characters and their dreams seem laughable, but when you see how much these activities mean to them, it’s impossible not to get caught up in their preparations for the big show. It’s an absolutely wonderful moment when Guest and Parker Posey sing “A Penny for Your Thoughts” in *Guffman*. It’s exhilarating when Eugene Levy steps in at the last minute and wins the dog show in *Best*. Levy and O’Hara’s climactic duet in *A Mighty Wind* always makes me cry.

But that’s never the note Guest ends these movies on. Instead, he always tacks on a “three months later” coda in which he shows all the characters, even the ones who achieved some kind of modest glory in the rest of the film, pursuing some new dream so pathetic, and so obviously destined to fail, all you can do is wince in embarrassment. Guest literally seems to be telling the audience,

“You know these people who you thought were so lovable? Yeah, turns out they’re really just idiots and losers after all.”

It’s pathological the way Guest systematically undercuts his characters for the sake of a cheap laugh, like when Harry Shearer’s character inexplicably undergoes a sex-change operation at the end of *A Mighty Wind*. I really hated what he did to Harlan Pepper, the hound-dog breeder he played in *Best in Show*, whose quietly eccentric dignity made him one of the movie’s most appealing characters—Guest ends the movie with Pepper performing an awkward ventriloquism act to a tiny crowd of unimpressed lodge members. Pepper’s incompetence isn’t even funny: it’s just a cruel way for Guest to assert his superiority (and that of the audience) over him. With the exception of Parker Posey and Michael Hitchcock’s hateful Yuppie couple in *Best in Show*, nobody in Guest’s movies is a villain—and yet Guest seems to feel that they all deserve a comeuppance anyway.

**WITH HIS NEXT FILM**, perhaps Guest

should consider making a couple of important changes to his approach. As pleasurable as it is to see people like Don Lake, Rebecca Theaker and Jane Lynch pop up in film after film, the size of Guest’s stock company is getting increasingly unwieldy.

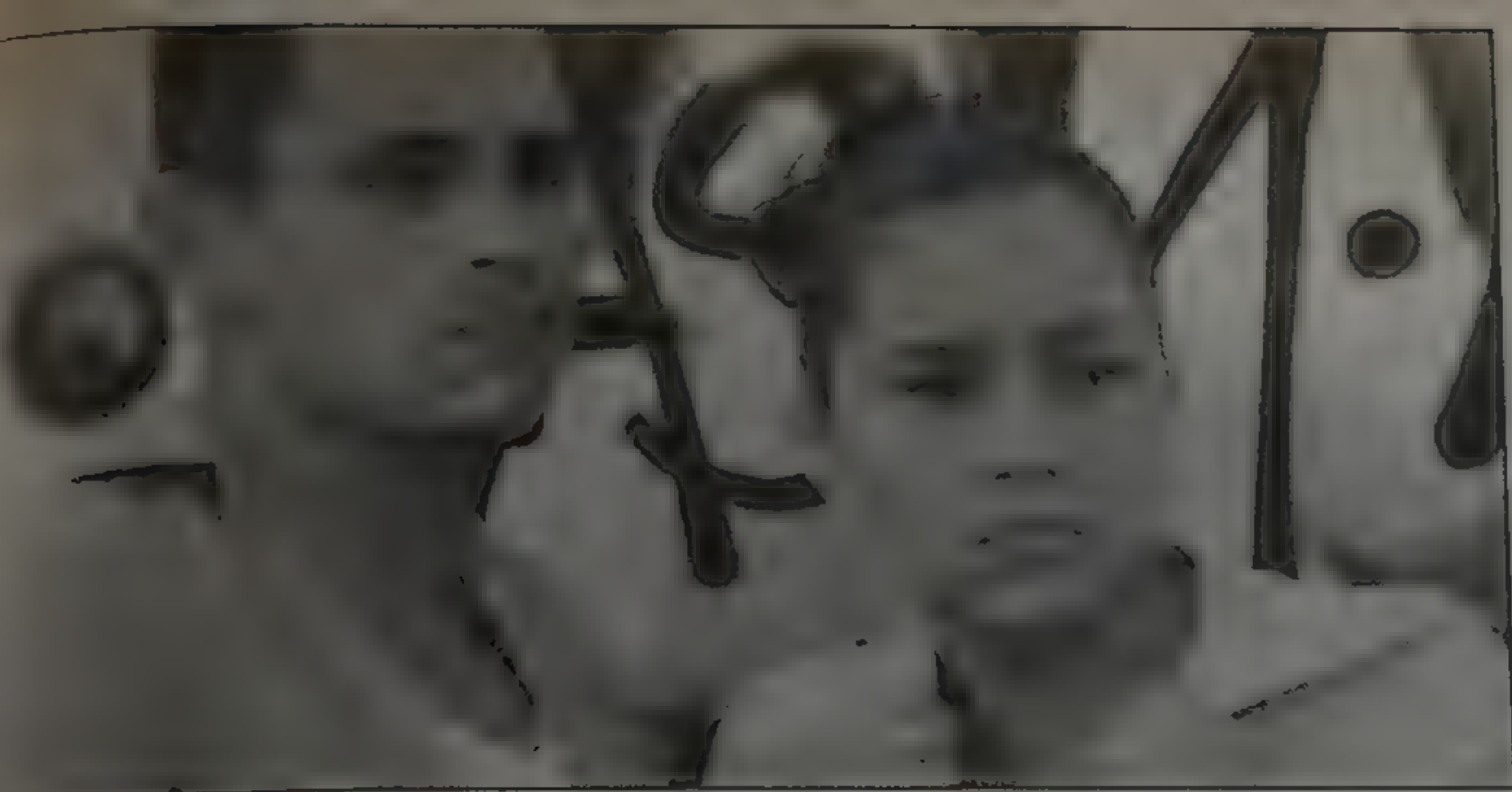
Guest’s desire to give all these performers their moment in the spotlight is understandable, but starting with *A Mighty Wind*, his movies have begun to feel overstuffed, sprawling, unfocused. And because each character gets so little screen time, they tend to register not as flesh-and-blood people but as two-dimensional “types”—or (as with Jennifer Coolidge and Fred Willard in *For Your Consideration*) as retreads of characters the actors played in previous Guest films. *This Is Spinal Tap*, the comedy classic that set the template for Guest’s improv/mockumentary format, really had only three main characters. *For Your Consideration* has at least a dozen.

And speaking of *Spinal Tap*, let me make a heretical suggestion: maybe it’s

time for Guest to reunite with Reiner. I know Reiner’s a notorious control freak, but as a director, he also has a strong visual style and a strong story construction that Guest would have properly directed. Reiner had made *For Your Consideration* he wouldn’t have let all the major developments happen offscreen. He would have properly directed the deterioration of Parker Posey’s character. Moynihan’s romantic life would actually have been shown. *Home for Purim*, the film-within-a-film, after it had been secularized, would have been *Home for Thanksgiving*.

And maybe he would have also had the generosity of spirit not to ridicule his characters simply for wanting to succeed in their chosen professions. Guest ends *For Your Consideration* with Parker Posey playing a tinny, sourly ironic record “Hooray for Hollywood” over the Reiner concludes *Spinal Tap* with Jane Lynch playing “Tonight I’m Gonna Rock (Tonight)” to an ecstatic crowd in a club. You tell me which is the better ending.

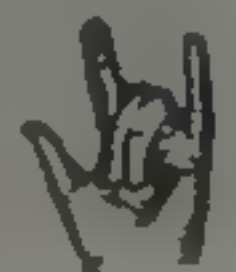




## Quinceañera comes out realistic and mystical

BY NIKODYM / carolyn@vulture.com

It always fills me with awe when a film delves into the murky waters of adolescence and gets it right. Whether comedic or dramatic, some filmmakers are satisfied with offering up one-dimensional stereotypes like the affected goth or the wholesome jock. Coming on 15, awaiting her special day, her quinceañera, Magdalena (Emily Rios) is like any other girls her age, occupied with boys, friends and her coming-out party. Daughter of a Mexican-American family living in Los Angeles, things start to go awry when Magdalena figures out why she is gaining weight. She's pregnant. The only thing is, she swears that she has never had sex with her boyfriend Ernesto (Jesus Sanchez-Chima).



THIS ROCKS

DRAMA

OPENS FRI, DEC 15  
**QUINCEANERA**  
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY RICHARD GLATZER, WASH WESTER-MONTANA  
STARRING EMILY RIOS, JESUS CASTANOS, JR CRUZ

Her family, who runs a store-front church, is totally embarrassed by the fiasco. How can Magdalena wear a virginal white gown at her quinceañera with a belly that everybody is talking about?

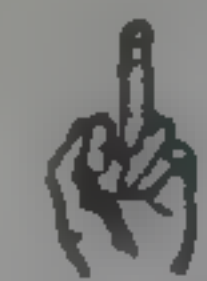
She goes to live with the outcasts of her family, her great-great uncle Tomas (Chalo González) and her cousin Carlos (Jesse Garcia), who is none too pleased about her arrival in the cramped apartment.

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

## From a wildly popular book, this dragon egg is a dud

BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vulture.com

Six years into the 21st century, and it already seems like it wouldn't be a holiday movie season without a Middle Age-y epic fantasy film. Enter *Eragon*, based on Christopher Paolini's recent novel.



THIS SUCKS

That title is the only clever part of the movie, suggesting both an era gone—a time when riders and their steeds protected the land—and that the farm lad of the title is one letter away from that steed he's meant to ride ... *Eragon* awaits his dragon.

So maybe the producers thought that, for his gothic-sounding name alone, first-time director Stefen Fangmeier was born to helm this film. Nope. As soon as Fangmeier sinks his teeth into the plot, he cuts from set piece to set piece in a frenzy, spitting out chunks of unnecessary voiceover and dizzying F/X as he mows through celluloid.

*Eragon* (Edward Speleers) grieves more for his newfound mentor Brom (Jeremy Irons) than the uncle who raised him. The telepathy between *Eragon* and his blue dragon, Saphira, is banal banter when more could be said through simple emoting. Battle scenes are brief, confusing and devoid of urgency or suspense. And rarely has a movie been so besieged by swells of music—apparently every character, no matter where they go, is being stalked by an orchestra.

WHILE FANGMEIER'S lack of pace and style betray his lack of confidence, all *Eragon*'s got is overconfidence and good looks. Speleers, a blond hunk-in-training, offers square-jawed defiance



FANTASY

OPENS FRI, DEC 15  
**ERAGON**  
DIRECTED BY STEFEN FANGMEIER  
WRITTEN BY PETER BUCHMAN, LAWRENCE KONNER, MARK ROSENTHAL, JESSE WIGUTOW, CHRISTOPHER PAOLINI  
STARRING EDWARD SPELEERS, JEREMY IRONS, ROBERT CARLYLE

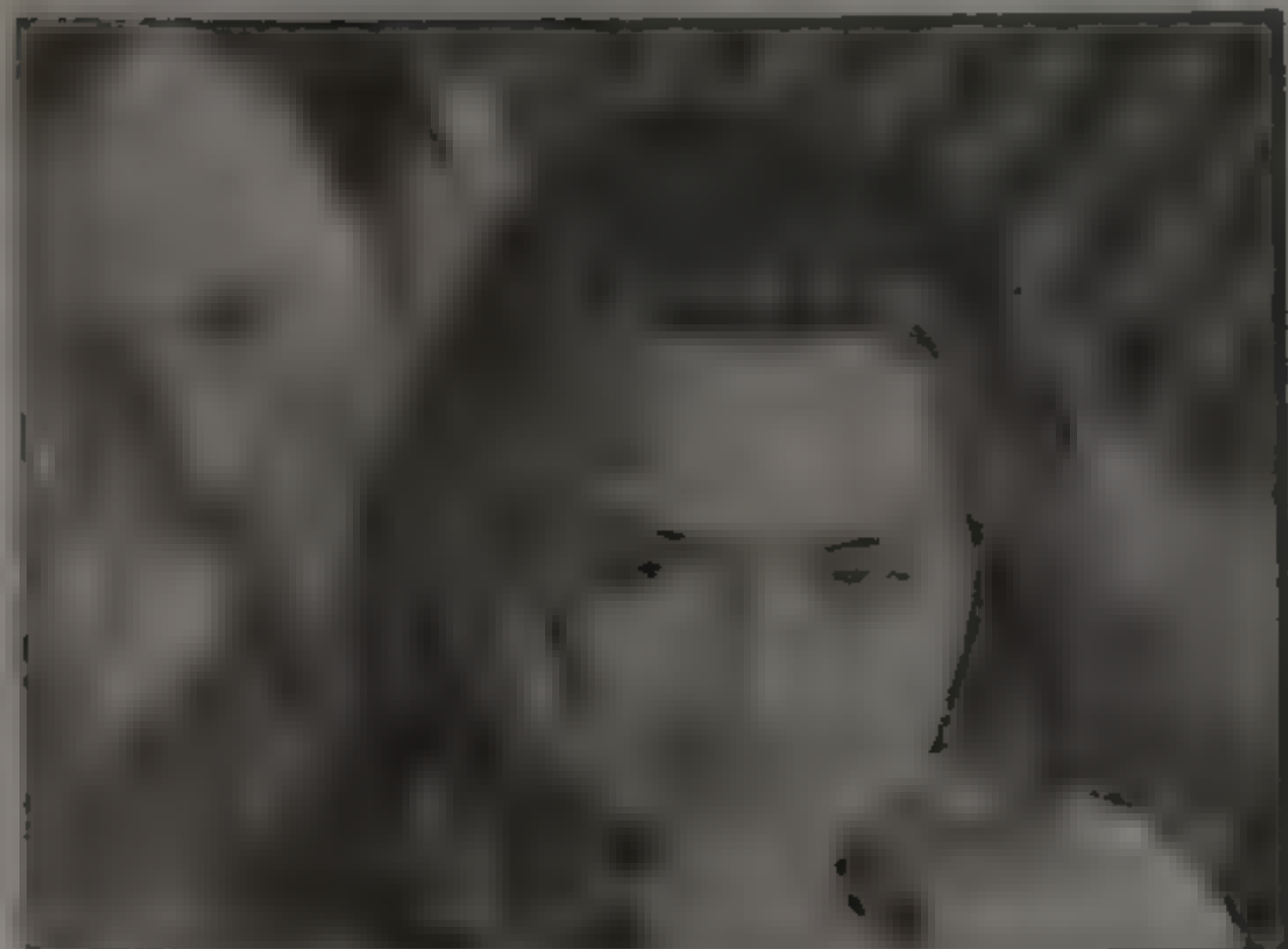
broken by a few sad stares. The movie's round table of screenwriters bludgeon us into submission with bluster about how heroic our hero is. Irons looks relieved when he can give a speech, as though he can pretend he's on a proper stage for a moment. Malkovich, as the tyrant over on the Darth Side, cashes his cheque and waits for

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

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## Cheech escorts audience through the surreal life

BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vuwweekly.com

What is it about the first few minutes of a film? The mainstream formula prescribes an audience-grabbing opening, often a pre-credit sequence that sets the ball of plot hurtling along ... except that, all too often, that rolling stone of an opener can end up gathering a lot of moss, debris and other crap as it goes.

It's as if directors put their visual stamp down early on, but then the ink dries out. (Take the opening sequence of *Magnolia*—please, take it and leave out the rest, which is plodding, third-rate Altman.)

*Cheech*, the big-screen adaptation of François Létoirneau's 2003 play, starts with a flourish—in fact, on his first date with feature film-making, director Patrice Sauvé offers a bouquet of camera flourishes. There's the surreal overhead image of a man lying dead in a room carpeted with snow. There are quick cuts between a tape—a voice sweetly asks the listener to picture being on a beach—and a cigarette, its ash tapped out into a black tray. There are wide-angle shots zooming in towards people, then closeups of the six connected characters—escort service owner Ron (Patrice Robitaille), assistant Max (Maxime Denommée), Max's beloved escort worker Stephanie (Fanny Mallette), co-worker Jenny (Anick Lemay), her boyfriend Olivier (Létoirneau) and neighbour Alexis (Maxim Gaudette)—as the action begins.

But that "action" is a break-in at Ron's business, involving the theft of his photo-book of the women who work for him. And since it's revealed soon after who got whom to burgle the place, that suspense is broken. What Ron thinks—that mega-rival Cheech is behind it—is what matters, leading to ...

Well, usually tragedy, or maybe tragicomedy. And perhaps the play, tighter-wound on the smallness of a stage, offered it. But here it is misunderstanding between uninteresting characters, with the camera trying to impose a sense of gravitas. Sauvé's zooms become dramatic filler puffed up on the stale air of forced tension.



THIS IS OK

DRAMA

OPENS, FRI, DEC 15

CHEECH

DIRECTED BY PATRICE SAUVÉ  
WRITTEN BY FRANÇOIS LÉTOIRNEAU  
STARRING PATRICE ROBITAILLE,  
FRANÇOIS LÉTOIRNEAU, ANICK LEMAY

Why close in on a doorknob when we know who's coming in? Why the clichéd shots of characters caught in reflect-on-life moments?

AS THE FILM'S early stylishness becomes a flashy façade, its theatrical beginnings start to look shabbier on the screen. Some of the coincidences are thematically purposeful, but others suggest claustrophobic contrivance, as if the only lives out there are stuck to this tight web of a story. There's no one on the streets, while people's apartments are personality-siphoned into banal backdrops. The often faintly comic characters come already mired in ennui, and there aren't any layers beneath the gloom: Max is a desperate dope, Olivier is a sad-sack guy who wants to get laid, while Ron is a seedy pimp in a mid-life crisis who listens to visualization tapes. The film doesn't quite know whether to linger on depression, float in wry comedy, or creep into Tarantino-esque neo-thriller territory.

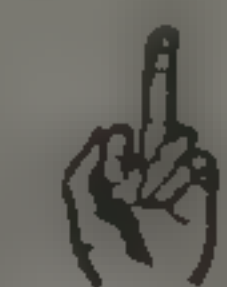
With its garish and seamy scenes (a "South American" party, a scarlet-lit Chinese restaurant, call girls posing for candid shots, Ron's back-alley office), its flabby shots and not-snappy-enough dialogue, *Cheech* is often like a nasty old pair of leopard-print underwear, its elastic frayed and loose.

Yet the film holds it together—whatever "it" is: a thriller with serious pretensions? a drama with thriller ambitions?—and even bunches and twists its plot threads nice and tight at the end. There are nicely surreal moments that pop up here and there, too, like Olivier's memory of a beach holiday as bloody water seeps around his feet or Ron getting out of his car to beat a man to death as his open-car-door signal chimes on and off, on and off. It's just too bad that the whole film has a mundane ring to it. ▼

## Mel Gibson's *Apocalypto* isn't the end of the world, but it's still pretty bad

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuwweekly.com

In its perplexingly generic recreation of Mayan civilization on the cusp of European colonization, Mel Gibson's *Apocalypto* practically urges you to make heads or tails of its reason for being.



THIS SUCKS

An emphatically grotesque action movie is itself no surprise to find in Gibson's oeuvre, nor is a movie featuring a hero who must retain faith in his prophesied destiny while having a seemingly endless string of punishments doled upon him.

The mystery is why Gibson thought he needed to deposit his ass-kicking Jesus-type in pre-conquest Yucatán.

Gibson invests a token prologue in detailing Mayan jungle life before the subsequent two hours of gore begins, but his method of having us identify with the characters seems to be the offering of a sort of Mayan *American Pie*, with knocks at a guy's fertility and a practical joke that involves eating tapir balls. It's a surprisingly tedious way to open an epic about the end of a civilization.

But soon enough *Apocalypto* is overwhelmed by torment, torture and decapitation, not to mention lousy dialogue subtitled into something at times suspiciously akin to contemporary American vernacular. Bum lines run the gamut from "Our life is over!

ACTION

NOW PLAYING

APOCALYPTO

DIRECTED BY MEL GIBSON  
WRITTEN BY GIBSON, FARHAD SAFINIA  
STARRING RUDY YOUNGBLOOD,  
DALIA HERNANDEZ, JONATHAN BREWER,  
MORRIS BIRDYELLOWHEAD

to "He's fucked." And you're boldly reminded Mel's the author here when a Mayan prays using the phrase "Forgive us for our trespasses."

I GUESS WHAT IS supposed to matter here is the action, of which there's plenty, yet even in this regard I can't say Gibson's approach seems all that inspired.

*Apocalypto*'s assembling of megabudget with a complete absence of stars and use of a language that only a tiny fragment of the viewing public understands speaks to a certain fascinating audacity in Gibson's character.

Yet the net effect of these eccentricities only serves to hinder the movie's bid for purely escapist violence, proposing instead something that might be best thought of as arthouse *Rambo*, a chase movie driven by feats of macho resourcefulness dressed up in exotic apparel.

Actually, *Apocalypto*'s closest model might be *Conan the Barbarian*, only with sado-Christian rather than exis-

emanates a wonderful sense that many young teens share—of having one foot in adulthood while the other is pulling back into childhood.

González, on the other hand, imbues his old uncle with wisdom and pathos that provides the emotional centre that holds both the characters and the film together. He is the voice of reason and everyone in the neighbourhood looks up to him—from the immigrant Latinos to the young gentrifying urbanites.

Although nobody believes Magdalena's virginal tale at first, there is still a magical sense to the tale as it unfolds. Loud and gossipy teen girls fill the screen with hope for the future, while Carlos's love affair puts a rosy hue on its sordid beginnings. And Tomas's flow-

tential-anarchist tendencies. Gibson's hero Jaguar Paw (moony-eyed Rudy Youngblood) endures much of the same fate as Conan.

Of course, *Conan* was unabashed fantasy, more inventive and entertaining and, strangely enough, philosophically sophisticated in its central relationship between the protagonist and his elusive god.

Among *Apocalypto*'s morally peddled themes lies the idea that conquering living folk are good-hearted and fundamentally strong through atonement with nature, while more civilized and thus decadent folks are in fact the truly barbaric ones.

More unsettling is the sense that the film is an odd sort of apology for colonization. The opening epigram from Will Durant about how great civilizations must be destroyed from within before they can be destroyed from without is creepier the more you think about it, carrying with it the implication that the moral crimes of conquistadors shouldn't be demonized since the Mayans were already performing acts of dehumanizing cruelty on themselves.

It treads a dangerous line of relativism that aligns itself all too closely with the vague, "universal" quality that Gibson seems to want to invoke. ▼

### QUINCEANERA

EXTRACTED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

But that's just the core plot. The film plays out more like an ensemble venture, and on the periphery, questions about race, sexuality and gentrification flit about, all asking to be danced with.

### CO-WRITERS AND DIRECTORS

Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland rise to the occasion, showing all of their ideas a turn on the floor. While this undeniably indie film is a little rough around the production edges, their characters, especially Tomas Magdalena, are wonderfully rounded.

Rios carries a solemn introspection to her confused Magdalena that

### ERAGON

EXTRACTED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the sequel (which the movie begs the audience for at the end). Robert Carlyle stands out, if only because his character, black sorcerer Durza, has long, flame-red hair and a ghoulish face.

The few women around are lasciviously abused and kept in thrall to men, from Brom's bizarre ogling of the furry, Bambi-eyed Saphira—who will die if her master does—to Durza's and the movie's vile, gazing caress of

Arya (Sienna Guillory, looking like any other wanna-be starlet but given little chance to act) as she is bound and in pain. Watch, though, for the gay panic scene where Durza snarls, "The boy is mine," and the film scrambles to reassert the hero's manliness by cutting to a topless, leather pants-wearing Speleers and the rebel king's daughter eyeing each other.

Eragon's world of fair Nordic hero vs evil Eastern Europeans (much of the film was shot in Hungary and Slovakia) is almost intriguingly complicated by the rebels, a mix of African royalty, Scottish henchmen and Ori-

ering garden and Virgin Mary altar behind the possibility for lush beginnings.

When the doctor confirms Magdalena is indeed still a virgin, it's a parents belief that this is a miracle contagious. While we know it's not and while nobody else quite believes them, either, there is still hope for miracles in general.

This is important, very important, because all the magic aside, there's no disguising the fact that life in Magdalena and her family is a constant battle. Cultures can flatten in the face of assimilation, and poor people are always forced to move first. The ones die, and teenagers get lost.

But when our stories celebrate humanity and honesty, they get closer to the miracles we all want.

ental warriors. But there's a reason to Look! In The Sky! On A Dragon! Hero! He's A Hero! Here's Our Future!

Never coming down to earth, *Eragon* is devoid of emotional depth. When Eragon's told, "You lost people who are dear to you—you've paid a great price for your courage," it's a laughable sentiment, because he hasn't seen him suffer. And it's the whom Eragon lost, the people who died, who paid the price for his courage—but the heavy price of the flick is between \$8 and \$12 plus the lost hours of your life. ▼



# it was a very good year



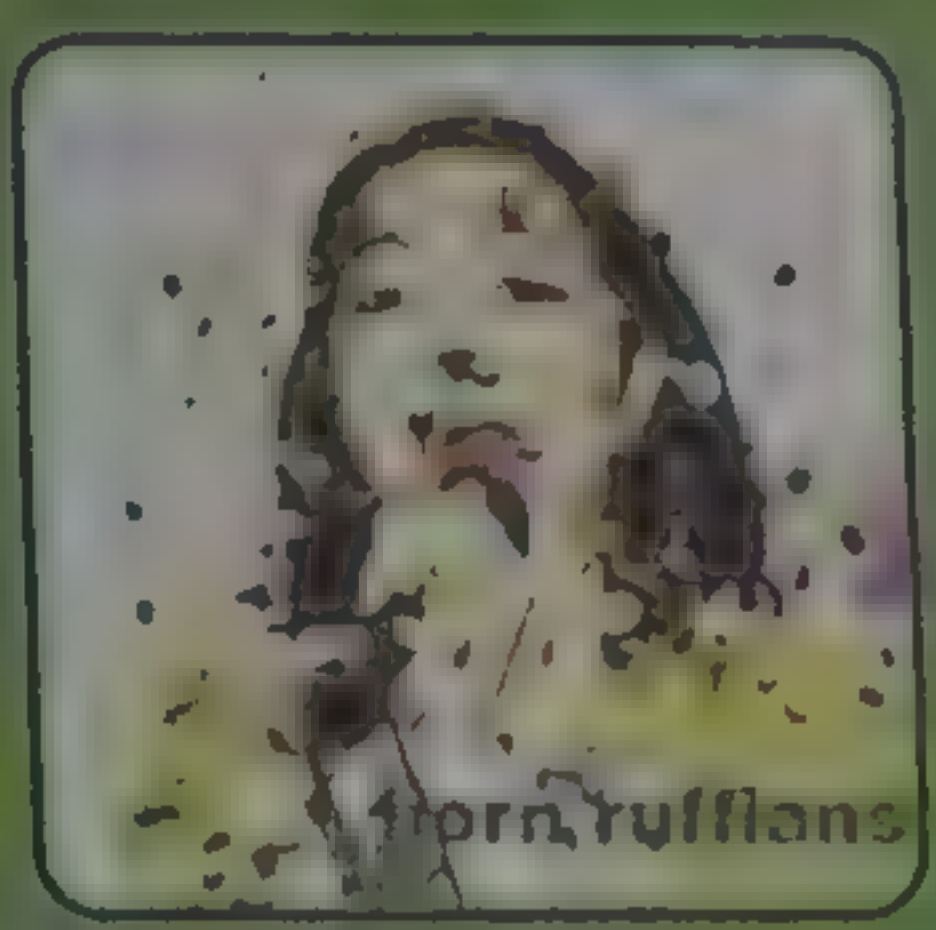
**THE BEATLES**  
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**ARCTIC MONKEYS**  
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**BAND OF HORSES**  
Everything All the Time (Capitol, 2005)  
The band's debut album, featuring the hit single 'The Sound of Silence'.



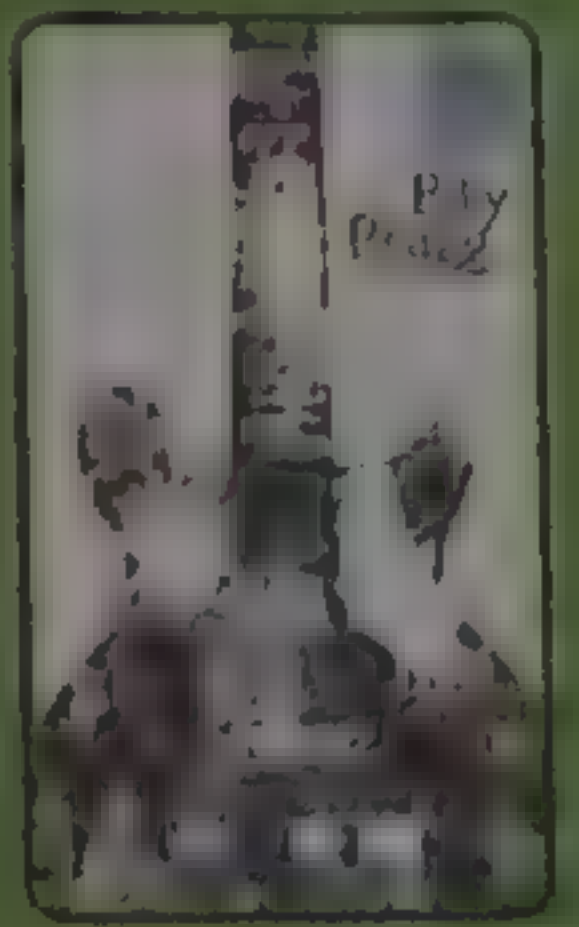
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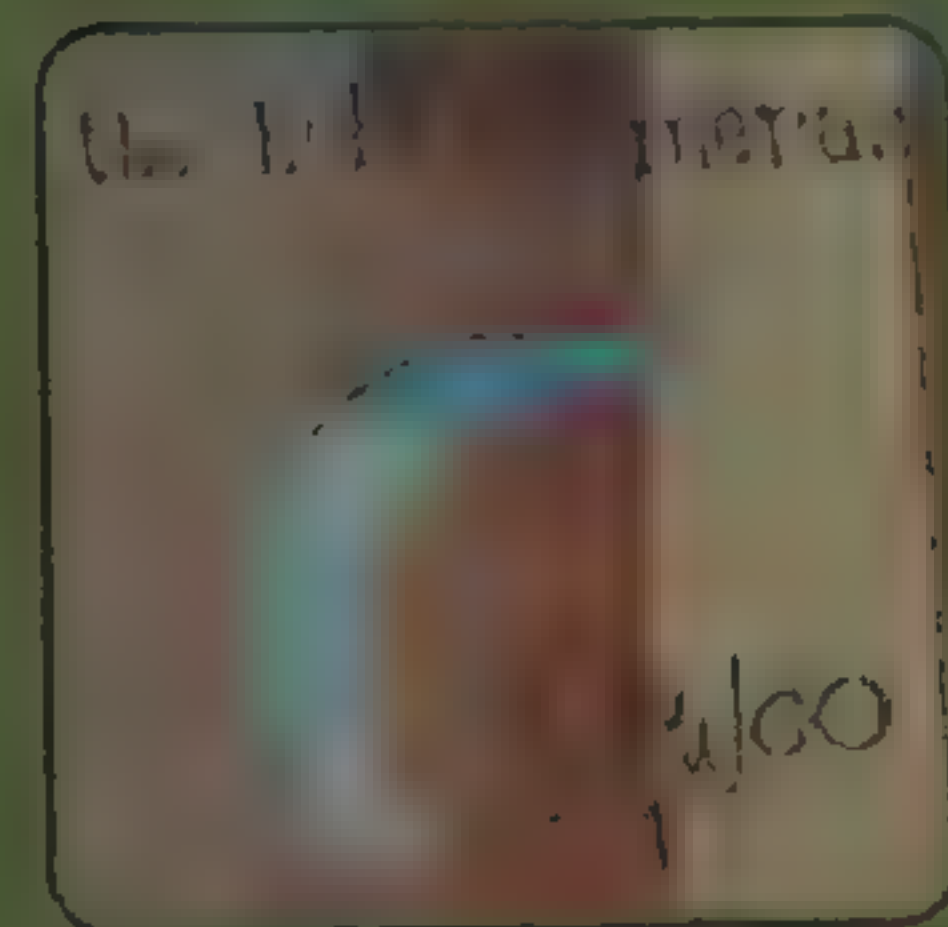
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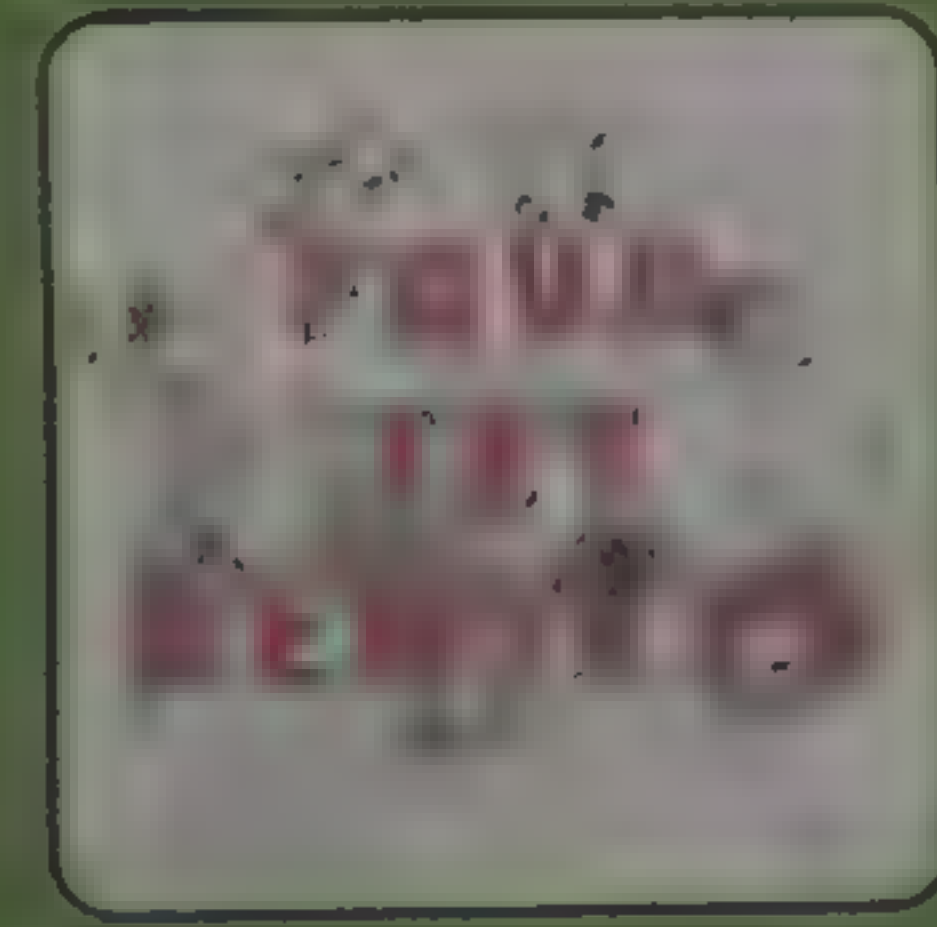
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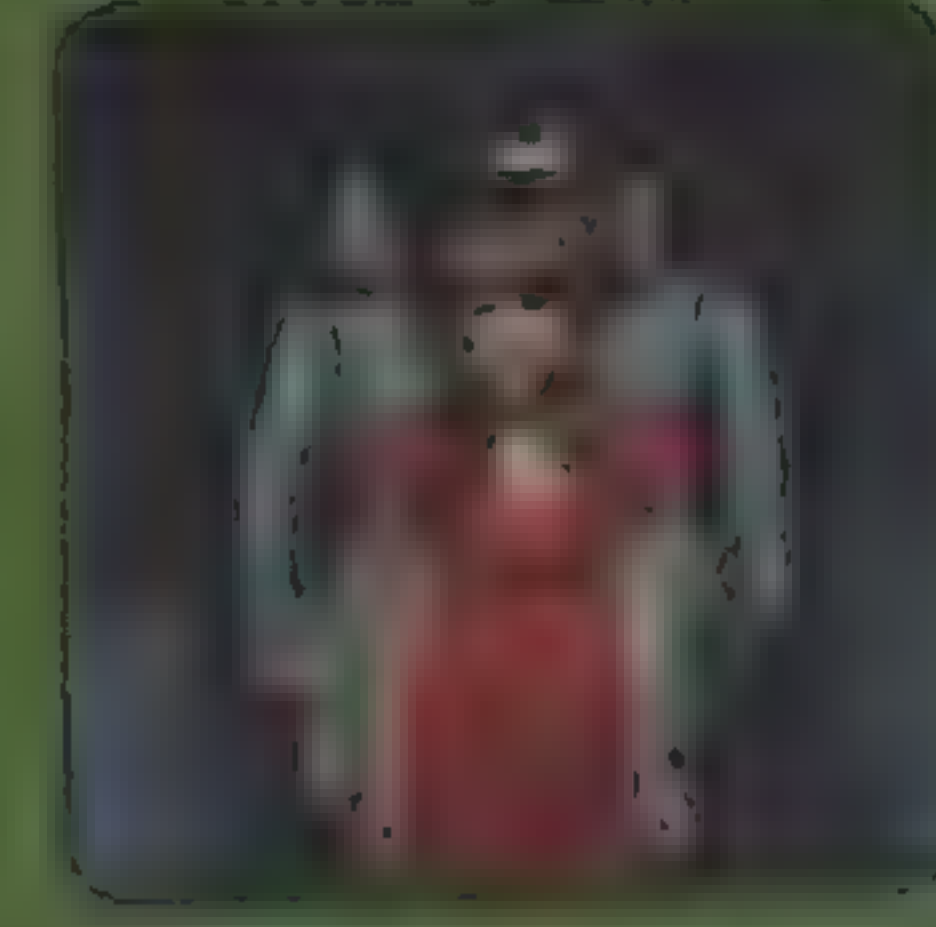
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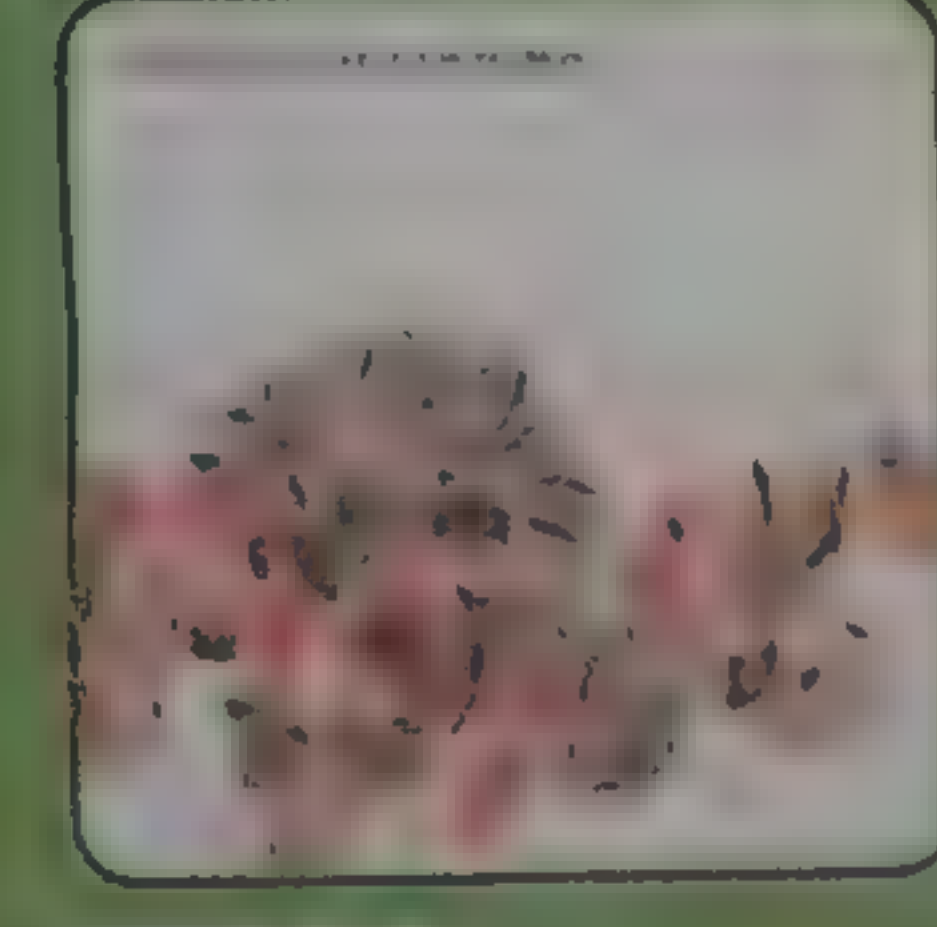
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**QUINCEANERA**

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# Diamond mines an uneasy truth

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vancouverweekly.com

Sending an unlikely trio with conflicting agendas into the war-stricken countryside of Sierra Leone circa 1999, **Blood Diamond** wants to be both a taut, mean action thriller and an instructive work of historical drama meant to draw public attention to the links between cutting glass and chopping off hands.



THIS ROCKS

Surprisingly, it actually meets both challenges quite well.

**Blood Diamond** is densely plotted, fast-paced and affecting, sometimes romantic, sometimes willfully didactic. Between the many bullet-ridden chase scenes and brutal massacres are allusions to the circuitry of consumerism and corruption that equates buying diamonds with funding blood-soaked African wars. These bits of exposition go by in a relative twinkle but still manage to solidly make their points, and it shouldn't be considered a flaw that each is punctuated with horrifying violence.

While in prison, Zimbabwe-born mercenary Danny Archer (Leonardo DiCaprio) learns of a whopper of a rock secretly buried in a riverbank by Mende fisherman Solomon Vandy (Djimon Hounsou). Once out, Solomon wants to be reunited with his family, Archer just wants cold hard cash—and Archer has the knowledge and connections to ensure both outcomes if the diamond is located.



This uneasy alliance is rounded out by US journalist Maddy Bowen (Jennifer Connelly), who knows Archer has sufficient dirt on the international diamond smuggling industry to supply her with the story of a lifetime. Rest assured, whatever tension manages to bubble up between she and Archer—a dash of Casablanca-esque parrying over responsibility vs cynicism—takes a backseat to more urgent concerns, and Bowen proves to be of far more use than merely supplying tousled eye candy.

**DIRECTED BY EDWARD ZWICK** (*Legends of the Fall*, *The Last Samurai*), the film's style is straightforward and effective. Like Charles Leavitt's screenplay, it's not particularly subtle, but subtlety is hardly vital to making this story come to life and stay alive for its two-hour-plus running time, during which the protagonists do a hell of a lot of running.

In one of the forgivable deus ex machinas that help hold this thing together, the trio spends a night with an altruistic landowner overseeing a deprogramming camp for kids who've

THRILLER

**BLOOD DIAMOND**  
DIRECTED BY EDWARD ZWICK  
WRITTEN BY CHARLES LEAVITT  
STARRING LEONARDO DICAPRIO,  
DJIMON HOUNSOU, JENNIFER CONNELLY,  
KARIS WYNN

been abducted by and received military training from the rebels. He and Archer talk about whether human beings are inherently good or bad and wind up agreeing that they're simply human.

"None of us knows which path will lead us to God," he tells Archer.

What's refreshing in **Blood Diamond** is that Archer, imbued with a blend of ruthlessness and charm by DiCaprio, isn't forced to suddenly do the right thing after a life of lawlessness and isolation. Archer's man of action does find a sort of redemption, but it's basically dragged out of him by the dictates of fate and a flash of plain wisdom that comes to most of us in a moment of truth—the same forces that are almost always in finding some measure of social change. ▽

**metro**  
CINEMA

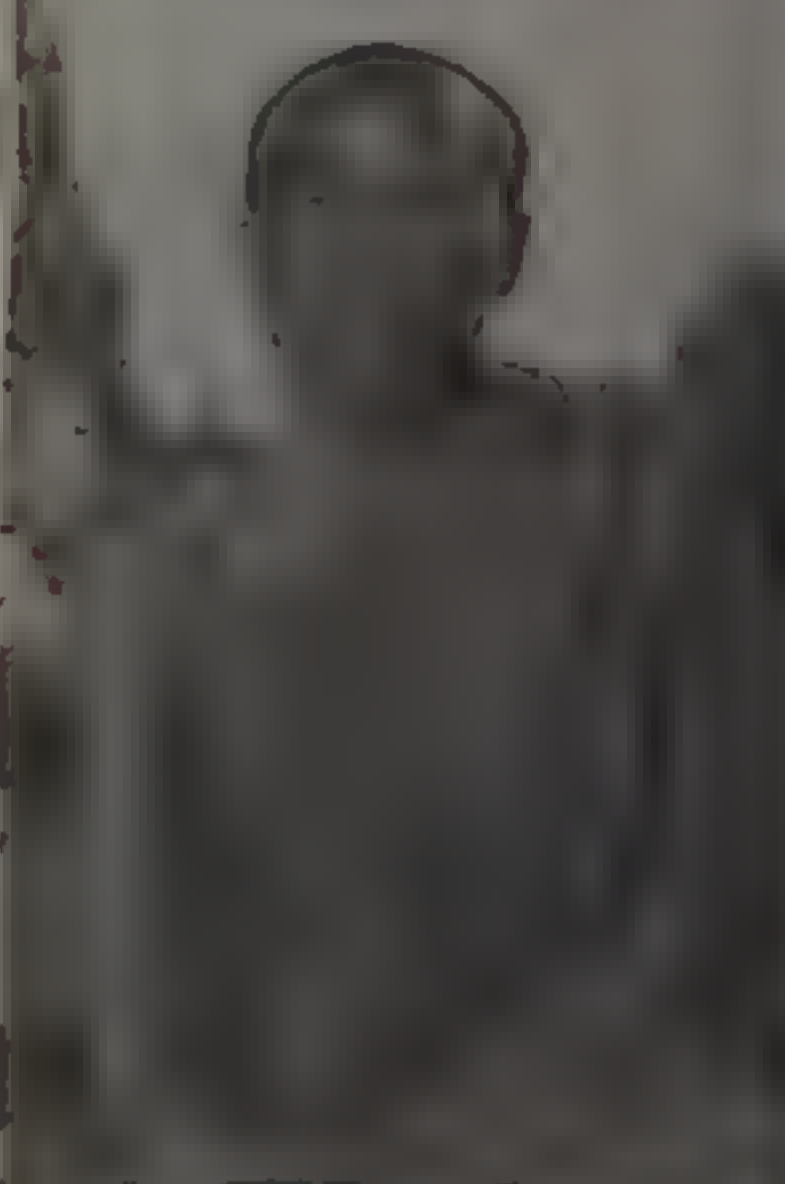
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Produced and Directed by John Bush

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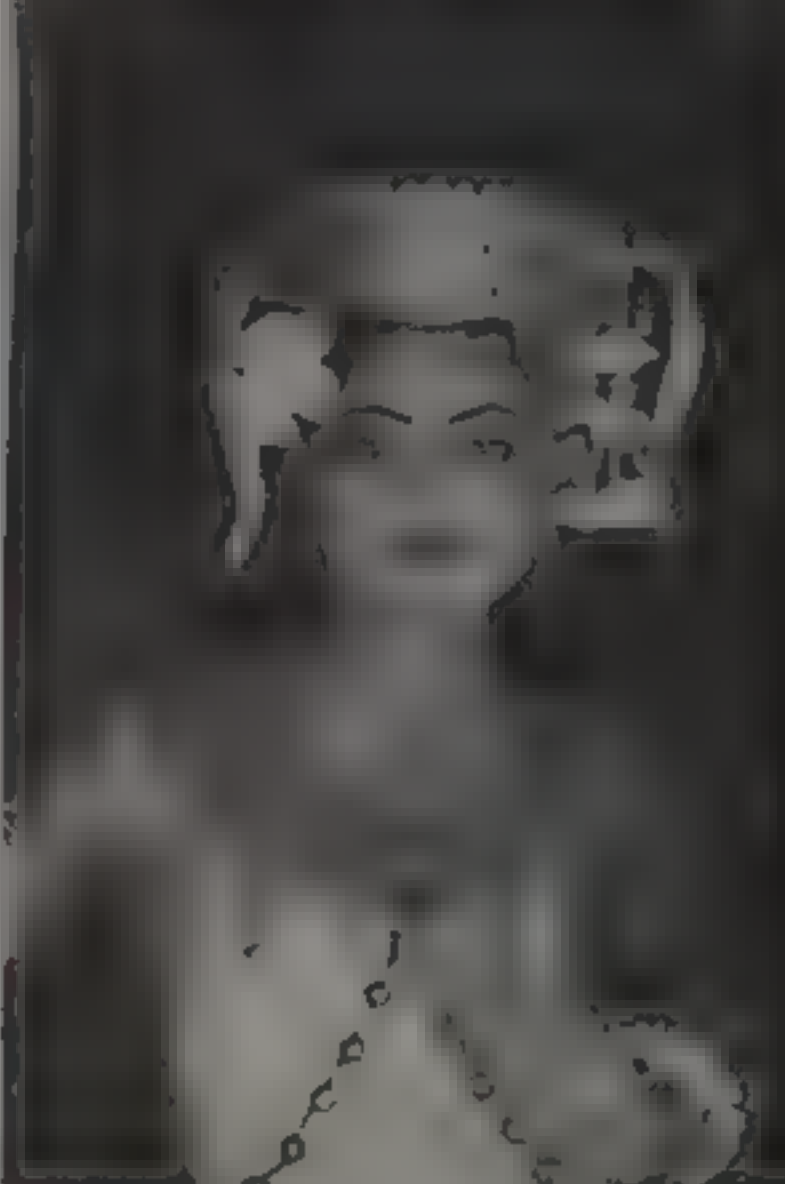
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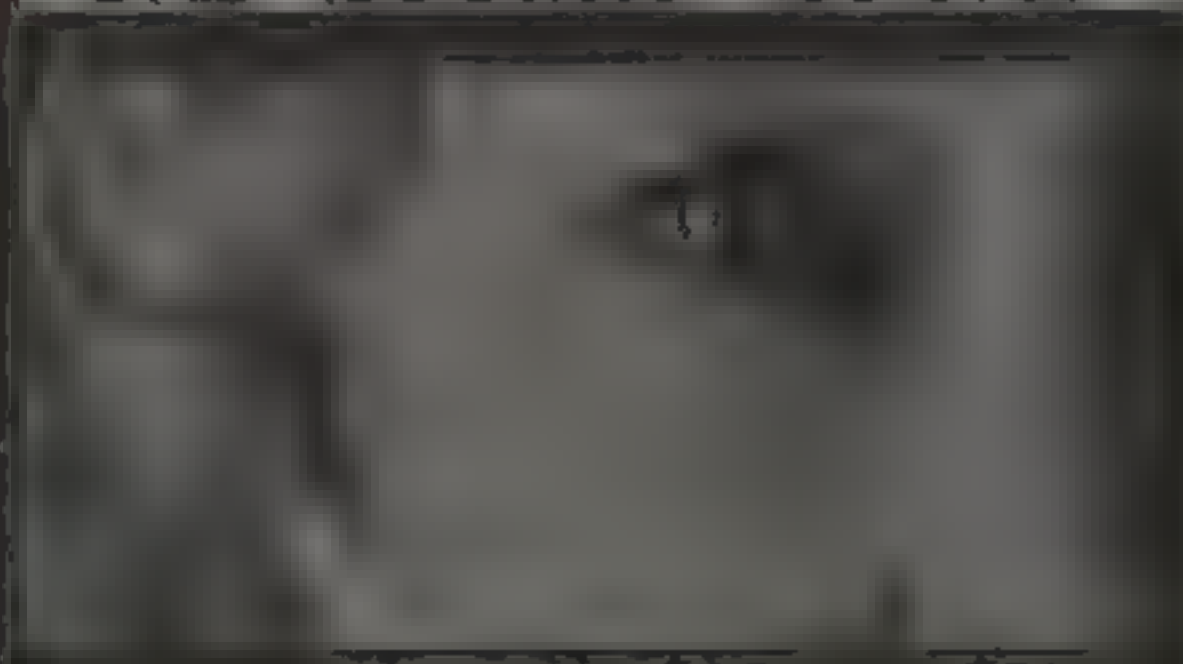
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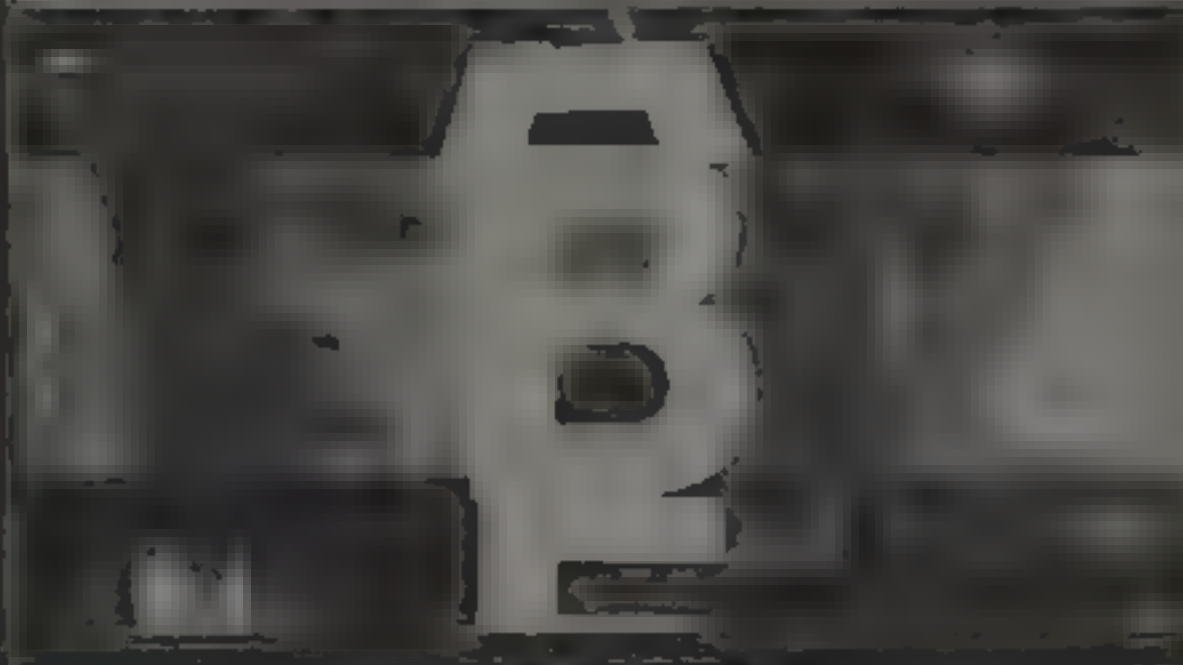
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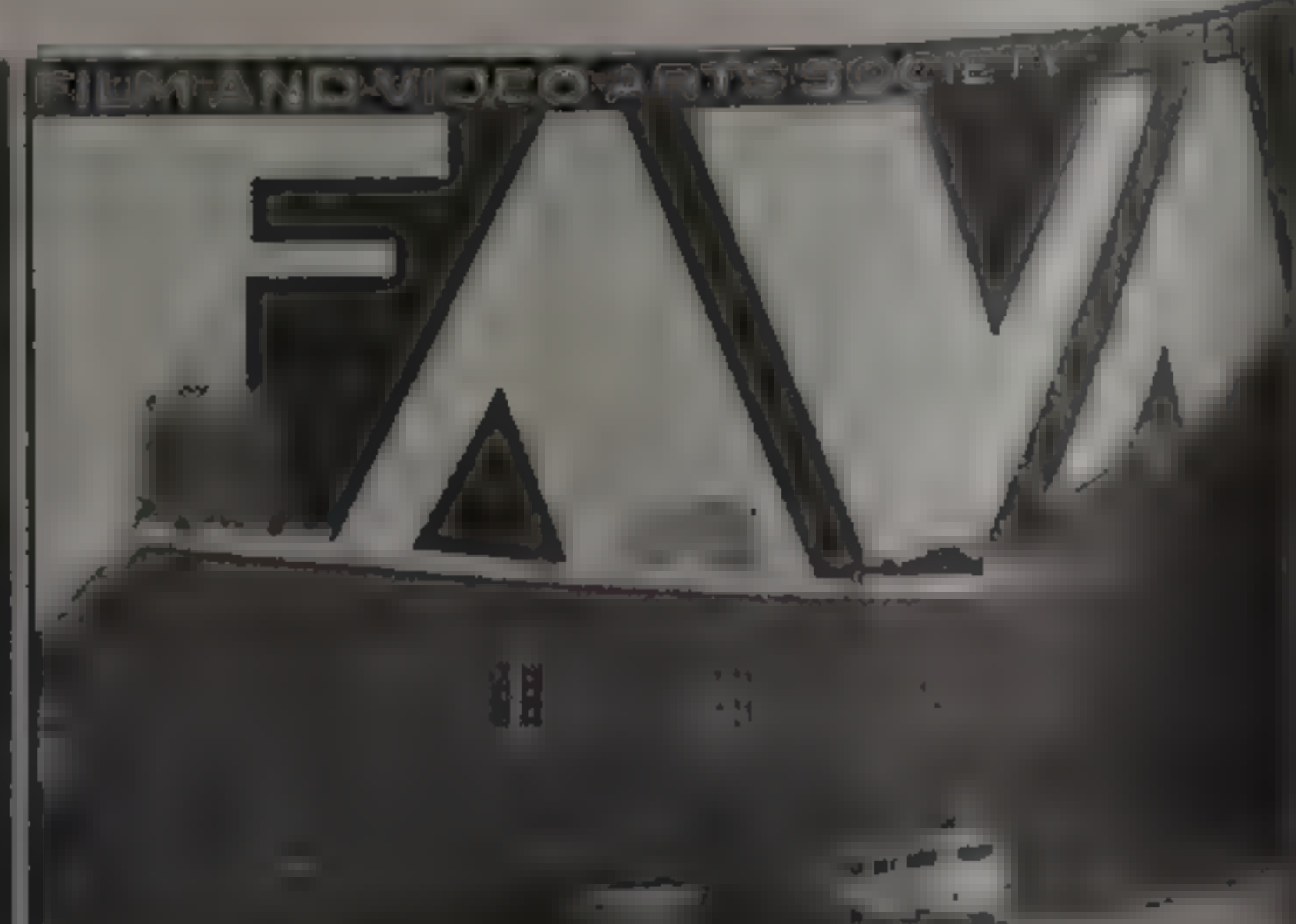
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**BEFORE THE MUSIC DIES** Bonnie Raitt, Elvis Costello and Matthews appear in first-time documentary director Andrew Shapter's critique of the homogenization of popular music. Read Mike Garth's review on page 58. **THE CITADEL**, THU, DEC 14 (9 PM)

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** Dakota Fanning and voices of Julia Roberts, Steve Buscemi and John Cleese star in 13 Going on 30 director Gary Winick's film about a spinster who weaves wordful webs to save the pig from certain death.

**THE MAXIME DENOMMÉE** Maxim Gorky and Anick Lemay star in first-time feature director Patrice Sauvé's drama about six people who live the worst day of their respective lives. Read Brian Gibson's review on page 58.

**EDWARD SPELEERS** Jeremy Irons and Anna Guillory star in first-time feature director Stefan Fangmeier's fantasy about a boy who discovers that he is a wizard. Read Brian Gibson's review on page 58.

**THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** Will Smith and Thandie Newton star in first-time director Gabriele Muccino's film about a struggling salesman who takes custody of his young son.

**THE TENOR** Jerry Bruckheimer and Antonio Banderas star in *The Tenor* directed by Brian Koppelman and Josh Weinstein about a 14-year-old boy who is kicked out of his house when his parents find out that he's gay. Read Carolyn Nikodym's review on page 58.

**THE HOUSE OF THE FLYING DUTCHMAN** Takakura, Shinbou Terajima and Nakai star in *House of the Flying Dutchman* director Yimou Zhang's film about a father who travels to the afterlife to see his dying son. Read Mike Braun's review on page 58. **THE CITADEL**, FRI, DEC 15 & SUN, DEC 17 (9 PM); **THE CITADEL**, MON, DEC 18 (7 PM)

## FILM LISTINGS

FRI, DEC 15 - THU, DEC 21, 2006

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

### CHARRA THEATRE-JASPER

6094 Connaught Dr., Jasper, 852-4749

**DECK THE HALLS** (PG) Fri-Sat 7:00, 9:10; Sun-Thu 8:00

**DÉJÀ VU** (14A) Fri-Sat 7:00, 9:10; Sun-Thu 8:00

### CINEMA CITY 12/MOVIES 12

Cinema 12: 3633-99 St., 463-5481

**THE DEPARTED** (18A, coarse language, violence) Daily 1:05, 4:00, 7:25; Fri Sat late show 10:40

**TRAILER PARK BOYS: THE MOVIE** (18A, coarse language, substance abuse) Sat Sun 11:30; Daily 2:00, 4:10, 7:00, 9:35; Fri Sat late show 11:35

**JET LI'S FEARLESS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun 11:15; Daily 1:30, 4:30, 7:15, 9:40; Fri Sat late show 11:55

**MAN OF THE YEAR** (PG, coarse language) Daily 4:40, 9:30; Fri Sat late show 11:50

**STEP UP** (PG) Sat Sun 10:55, Daily 1:40, 7:20

**BARNYARD** (G) Sat Sun 11:10; Daily 1:25

**FLICKA** (G) Sat Sun 11:00, Daily 1:50, 4:25

**LET'S GO TO PRISON** (14A, coarse language) Sat Sun 11:35, Daily 2:05, 4:55, 7:40, 9:55; Fri Sat late show 11:50

**THE GUARDIAN** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Daily 4:25, 7:35; Fri Sat late show 10:55

**OPEN SEASON** (G) Sat Sun 11:00, Daily 1:10, 3:10, 5:00, 7:10, 9:25; Fri Sat late show 11:40 Kids Kabin Fever: Dec. 21, 1:10

**LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE** (14A, coarse language, mature themes) Sat Sun 11:25, Daily 2:10, 4:35, 7:05, 9:45; Fri Sat late show 12:00

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH** (PG, coarse language) Daily 7:20, 10:00; Fri Sat late show 12:10

**THE MARINE** (14A, violence) Daily 1:45, 9:50; Fri Sat late show 11:45

**THE ILLUSIONIST** (PG, mature themes) Sat Sun 11:20, Daily 4:05, 6:50

**THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA** (PG) Sat Sun 11:05, Daily 1:35, 4:00, 6:55, 9:20; Fri Sat late show 11:45

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST** (PG, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Daily 1:20, 4:20, 7:30; Fri Sat late show 10:50

**THE DEPARTED** (18A, coarse language, violence) Daily 12:45, 3:45, 6:45, 9:45

**TRAILER PARK BOYS: THE MOVIE** (18A, coarse language, substance abuse) Sat Sun 11:25, Daily 1:55, 4:45, 7:35, 10:00; Fri Sat late show 12:10

**JET LI'S FEARLESS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun 11:15, Daily 1:45, 4:45, 7:10, 9:25; Fri Sat late show 11:40

**MAN OF THE YEAR** (PG, coarse language) Sat Sun 11:05, Daily 1:35, 4:30, 7:00, 9:35; Fri Sat late show 11:55

**STEP UP** (PG) Sat Sun 11:10, Daily 1:40, 4:25, 6:55, 9:20; Fri Sat late show 11:45

**BARNYARD** (G) Sat Sun 11:30, Daily 1:50

**FLICKA** (G) Sat Sun 11:00, Daily 1:05, 3:05

**LET'S GO TO PRISON** (14A, coarse language) Sat Sun 11:05, Daily 1:30, 4:20, 7:25, 9:40; Fri Sat late show 11:50

**THE GUARDIAN** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Daily 1:05, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30

**OPEN SEASON** (G) Sat Sun 11:20, Daily 1:10, 3:10, 5:05, 7:05, 9:10; Fri Sat late show 11:15 Kids Kabin Fever: Dec. 21, 1:10

**THE GRUDGE 2** (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 4:40, 9:45; Fri Sat late show 11:50

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH** (PG, coarse language) Sat Sun 11:35, Daily 2:00, 7:15

**THE MARINE** (14A, violence) Daily 5:10, 7:40, 9:55; Fri Sat late show 12:00

**THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA** (PG) Daily 4:35, 7:20, 9:50; Fri Sat late show 12:05

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST** (PG, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Daily 1:00, 4:15, 7:30; Fri Sat late show 10:40

### CITY CENTRE 3

10200-102 Ave., 421-7020

**BLOOD DIAMOND** (14A, violence, disturbing content) Daily 12:10, 3:25, 6:35, 9:45

**THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (PG) Daily 12:15, 3:10, 7:10, 10:10

**CASINO ROYALE** (14A, violence) Daily 12:00, 3:15, 6:30, 9:40

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** (G) Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:30

**DÉJÀ VU** (14A) Fri-Sun Tue 12:40, 3:45, 6:50, 10:05; Mon 12:40, 3:45, 10:05

**HAPPY FEET** (G) Daily 12:50, 3:50

**STRANGER THAN FICTION** (PG) Daily 6:25, 9:15

**THE NATIVITY STORY** (PG) Daily 1:20, 4:20

**BORAT** (14A, coarse language, sexual content, crude content, not recommended for children) Daily 7:25, 10:10

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily 12:35, 3:40, 6:40, 9:55

**APOCALYPTO** (14A, gory scenes, brutal violence) Daily 12:25, 3:35, 6:45, 9:50

**ROCKY BALBOA** (PG) Wed-Thu 1:10, 4:25, 7:20, 10:05

### CLAREVIEW

421-139 Ave., 472-7600

**BLOOD DIAMOND** (14A, violence, disturbing content) Daily 12:10, 3:25, 6:35, 9:45

**THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (PG) Daily 12:15, 3:10, 7:10, 10:00

**CASINO ROYALE** (14A, violence) Daily 12:00, 3:15, 6:30, 9:40

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** (G) Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:30

**DÉJÀ VU** (14A) Fri-Sun Tue 12:40, 3:45, 6:50, 10:05; Mon 12:40, 3:45, 10:05

**HAPPY FEET** (G) Daily 12:50, 3:50

**STRANGER THAN FICTION** (PG) Daily 6:25, 9:15

**THE NATIVITY STORY** (PG) Daily 1:20, 4:20

**BORAT** (14A, coarse language, sexual content, crude content, not recommended for children) Daily 7:25, 10:10

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily 12:35, 3:40, 6:40, 9:55

**APOCALYPTO** (14A, gory scenes, brutal violence) Daily 12:25, 3:35, 6:45, 9:50

**ROCKY BALBOA** (PG) Wed-Thu 1:10, 4:25, 7:20, 10:05

### GALAXY CINEMAS-SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 416-0150

**THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (PG, no passes) Fri 4:20, 7:15, 10:10; Sat-Sun 12:40, 4:20, 7:15, 10:10; Mon-Thu 7:15, 10:10

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** (G, no passes) Fri 3:20, 6:20, 9:15; Sat Sun 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50; Mon-Thu 8:20, 9:15

**ERAGON** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children, no passes) Fri 4:10, 7:10, 9:45; Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:10, 7:10, 9:45; Mon-Thu 7:10, 9:45

**BLOOD DIAMOND** (14A, violence, disturbing content) Fri 3:50, 7:00, 9:55; Sat-Sun 12:50, 3:50, 7:00, 9:55; Mon-Thu 7:00, 9:55

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Fri 3:45, 6:50, 9:50; Sat-Sun 12:35, 3:45, 6:50, 9:50; Mon-Thu 6:50, 9:50

**UNACCOMPANIED MINORS** (G) Fri 3:25, 7:05; Sat-Sun 12:45, 3:25, 7:05; Mon-Thu 7:05

**APOCALYPTO** (14A, gory scenes, brutal violence) Fri 3:35, 6:45, 10:15; Sat-Sun 12:25, 3:35, 6:55, 10:15; Mon-Thu 6:45, 10:15

**THE NATIVITY STORY** (PG) Daily 9:40

**DÉJÀ VU** (14A) Fri 3:15, 6:20, 10:05; Sat 12:30, 3:15, 6:20, 10:05; Sun 12:30, 3:15, 10:05; Mon-Thu 6:20, 10:05

**CASINO ROYALE** (14A, violence) Fri 3:30, 6:45, 10:00; Sat-Sun 12:15, 3:30, 6:45, 10:00; Mon-Thu 6:45, 10:00

**HAPPY FEET** (G) Fri 3:55, 6:30, 9:30; Sat-Sun 1:00, 3:55, 6:30, 9:30; Mon-Thu 6:30, 9:30

**WWE: ARMAGEDDON** (Classification not available) Sun 6:00

### GARNEAU

10000-100 Ave., 472-7600

**THE QUEEN** (PG) Daily 7:00, Sat-Sun 1:00

**BABEL** (14A, mature themes, not recommended for children) Daily 9:00; Sat-Sun 3:00

### GATEWAY 8

3300 Gateway Trail, 472-7600

**THE FOUNTAIN** (14A) Fri Mon-Thu 6:40, 9:15; Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:00, 6:40, 9:45

**BARBUL** (PG) Fri Mon-Thu 6:30, 6:45; Sat-Sun 3:30, 6:30, 9:45

**FLUSHED AWAY** (G) Fri Mon-Thu 7:10, Sat-Sun 1:15, 3:15, 7:10

**SAW III** (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence) Daily 9:10

**KABUL EXPRESS** (PG) Fri Mon-Thu 7:00, 9:15; Sat-Sun 1:00, 3:45, 7:00, 9:15

**NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF TAJ** (14A, sexual content, crude content) Fri Mon-Thu 7:15, 9:35; Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:15, 7:15, 9:35

**TENACIOUS D IN: THE PICK OF DESTINY** (14A, crude sexual language, substance abuse) Fri Mon-Thu 7:20, 9:40; Sat-Sun 1:40, 4:10, 7:20, 9:40

**THE PRESTIGE** (14A) Fri Mon-Thu 6:45, 9:20; Sat-Sun 1:45, 3:40, 6:35, 9:20

**THE QUEEN** (PG) Fri Mon-Thu 6:50, 9:25; Sat-Sun 1:20, 3:50, 6:50, 9:25

### GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, St. Winston Churchill Ave., St. Albert, 968-2728

**ERAGON** (PG, not recommended for young children, violence) Daily 1:15, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:15

**UNACCOMPANIED MINORS** (G) Daily 1:20, 3:10, 5:05, 6:55, 8:50

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** (G) Daily 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

**HAPPY FEET** (G) Daily 1:25, 3:45, 6:45, 8:55

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily 12:55, 3:30, 6:05, 8:45

**LEDUC CINEMAS**

4762-50 St. Leduc, 968-2728

**UNACCOMPANIED MINORS** (G) Daily 7:10, 9:15; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:25

**ERAGON** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children) Daily 6:55, 9:25; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:35

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily

### MAGIC LANTERN CINEMA-CAMROSE

Camrose, 780-699-2144

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** (G) Daily 7:10, 9:05; Sat, Sun, Tue 2:10

**ERAGON** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children) Daily 7:05, 9:00; Sat, Sun, Tue 2:05

**PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (PG) Daily 6:55, 9:10; Sat, Sun, Tue 1:55

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily 6:50, 9:15; Sat, Sun, Tue 1:50

**HAPPY FEET** (G) Daily 7:00; Sat, Sun, Tue 2:00

**UNACCOMPANIED MINORS** (G) Daily 9:20

### MAGIC LANTERN CINEMA-SPRUCE GROVE

205 Main St., Spruce Grove, 972-2332

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** (G) Daily 7:00, 9:00; Sat-Sun 1:00, 3:00

### METRO CINEMA

8828-101A Ave., Citadel Theatre, 425-9212

**VAJRA SKY OVER TIBET** (STC) Fri 7:00, Mon 9:00

**DHARMA RIVER: JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND BUDDHAS** (STC) Sat 9:00

**PRAJNA EARTH: JOURNEY INTO SACRED NATURE** (STC) Sun 7:00

**RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES** (PG) Sat Mon 7:00; Fri Sun 9:00

### NEW WEST MALL 8

8882-170 St., 444-1829

**TRAILER PARK BOYS: THE MOVIE** (18A, coarse language, substance abuse) Fri 3:50, 6:30, 9:15; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9:15; Mon-Thu 6:30, 9:15

**CHEECH** (14A, nudity, coarse language, subtitled) Daily 9:50

**FLICKA** (G) Fri 4:20, 7:20; Sat-Sun 1:40, 4:20, 7:20; Mon-Thu 7:20

**RUNNING WITH SCISSORS** (14A, mature theme, coarse language) Fri 4:00, 6:45; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:50, 6:30; Mon-Thu 6:45, 9:55

**LET'S GO TO PRISON** (14A, coarse language) Fri 3:40, 6:30, 9:15; Sat-Sun 1:50, 4:40, 7:30; Mon-Thu 6:30, 9:15

**OPEN SEASON** (G) Fri 4:30, 7:00, 9:30; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:40, 6:10, 8:40; Mon-Thu 7:00, 9:30

**THE ILLUSIONIST** (PG, mature themes) Sat-Sun 11:20, 1:40, 4:10, 6:50, 9:45; Mon-Thu 7:20, 9:45

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH** (PG, coarse language) Fri 4:10, 7:10, 10:30; Sat-Sun 1:40, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00; Mon-Thu 7:10, 10:00

**THE GUARDIAN** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Fri 3:45, 6:40, 9:40; Sat-Sun 1:00, 3:45, 6:40, 9:40; Mon-Thu 9:40

### NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS

10000-100 Ave., 472-7600

**THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (PG, no passes) Daily 1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:40

**ERAGON** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children, no passes) Daily 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 7:50, 10:30

**THE HOLIDAY** (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

**APOCALYPTO** (14A, gory scenes, brutal violence) Daily 12:30, 3:40, 6:45, 9:50

**BLOOD DIAMOND** (14A, violence, disturbing content) Fri-Mon Wed-Thu 12:40, 3:50, 7:10, 10:15, Tue 3:50, 7:10, 10:15

**UNACCOMPANIED MINORS** (G) Fri-Sun Thu 12:00, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10; Sat 12:00, 2:10, 4:30, 6:40

**THE NATIVITY STORY** (PG) Fri-Tue Thu 12:45, 3:30, 6:45, 9:40; Wed 12:45, 3:30, 6:45

**DECK THE HALLS** (PG) Fri-Tue 1:20, 4:15

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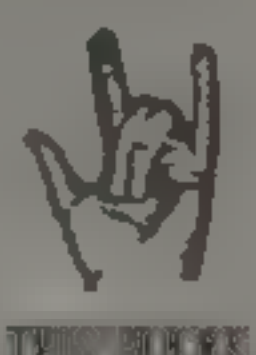




## B4MD snaps and crackles against commercial pop

MIKE GARTH / michael@vuweekly.com

From the title alone, *B4MD: Before the Music Dies* suggests the bleak notion of a well-known fact: popular American music isn't worth the time of day to anyone who takes music seriously



MUSIC DOC

THU, DEC 14 (9 PM)

**B4MD: BEFORE THE MUSIC DIES**

DIRECTED BY ANDREW SHAPTER

WRITTEN BY SHAPTER, JOEL RASMUSSEN

INTERVIEWS & PERFORMANCES BY ERYKAH BAOU, CALEXICO, DOYLE BRAMHALL II, MANY OTHERS

METRO CINEMA, DONATIONS TO FOOD BANK

This documentary, however, does an impressive job of relying not on the Ashlee Simpson/ProTools side of the industry to tell their story, but on the words of true musicians, producers and fans within the scene.

Filmmakers Andrew Shapter and Joel Rasmussen each recently lost a musically talented sibling prior to the making of the film, providing a truly personal drive that shows through in their detail.

Based in Austin, Texas, the pair roamed the US for two years, gauging people's response when asked about the current state of American music. A greatly entertaining segment (that could make for a separate film all together) puts things in perspective by turning a beautiful young model with no, I repeat, no previous singing experience into a pop star overnight—literally. Their hypothetical accomplishment is guaranteed to send a chill down your spine.

Forrest Whittaker's narration is scarce, letting the insightful views of Erykah Badu, Branford Marsalis and Questlove, among many others, be heard in their necessary depth. With iconic quotes from the likes of Dylan and Coltrane used to begin each section of the documentary, the film gives the interviewees equal prominence, such as Badu when she speaks of the popular music of days gone by. One could be as "ugly as a muthafucka," and still have a successful music career, she states

Immensely talented, though physically challenged artists like Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder, as Marsalis adds, simply wouldn't have a chance in the music industry had they emerged today

**THE INFLUENTIAL FORCES** of radio and the internet are explored, and a case study of rock guitarist Doyle Bramhall II only furthers the growing sense of frustration when shining talent gets dumped by the major labels for the sake of commerce.

The film is ultimately encouraging, however, and doesn't let mainstream music's superficiality take the spotlight. Given its relatively short running time, the filmmakers do an excellent job of covering many aspects of American music, all the while showing no signs of letting up on the potential for the general public to make the distinction between music and pop culture.

"[Music's] brutal honesty pierces the walls of our impersonal world," is one of many noteworthy quotes from Branford Marsalis.

This will no doubt ring true for anyone who enjoys the pure escapism of listening to quality music, no matter what the time period or genre. For those who produce, distribute and, lo and behold, actually play the music, this stands as a serious wake-up call that should not be missed. ▼

VUWEEKLY

MUSIC

REBEKAH HIGGS / 66

THE SWIFTYS / 67

LONG WAY DOWN / 73



## Coheed and Cambria's show moves to the beat of a different drummer ... and bassist

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Maybe your opinion of humanity is vastly different from my own, but I can't picture anyone predicting that a prog-metal/emo band who record nothing but concept albums—well, a concept cycle, really, with each individual album another part of the as-yet unfinished whole—would grow beyond anything other than a cult following as small and bizarre as Earthdawn role-players.

So it must come as an extra kick when, at the height of a success that has them rocking arenas and occupying MTV's charts, **Coheed and Cambria** found out their rhythm section was toodle-ooing; fans of the band obviously have particular tastes, so surely the departure of bassist Michael Todd and drummer Josh Eppard would cause more consternation than is normal when a band loses a member.

Not so, according to guitarist/backup vocalist Travis Stever—in fact, according to him, the half-break up might just be the

PREVIEW

FRI, DEC 15 (7 PM)

JINGLE BELL ROCK

**COHEED AND CAMBRIA**

WITH ATREYU, FALL OF TROY, TEN SECOND EPIC  
SHAW CONFERENCE CENTRE, \$39.50

thing that he and frontman Claudio Sanchez need to revitalize a band that's been going at it for well over a decade now.

"There isn't a fear; it's more of a kind of nervous excitement," explains Stever over the phone from his home in New York, where the band is training new recruits Matt Williams and Chris Pennie (formerly of Dillinger Escape Plan) for their upcoming Jingle Bell Rock show.

"I think the overall feeling between Claudio and me was that we had been working so hard for so long to get to where we are, and we needed to finish what we started. Plus it's exciting to get a chance to hear what someone else brings to the table and see how they're going to leave their mark on the identity we've already established."

**THAT MARK** will

fairly quickly, as the band is working on a follow-up, arguably their most mouthful, *Good for You*, Star IV, Volume 0

through the Eyes of Mark. For Stever, really, the band's moves are essentially just a natural example of what the band has been doing on each album, and somewhere new and trying something different.

"I've never listened to anything new, mostly because I'm not eager to just get onto something," Stever explains, adding encompassing new member definition moving on to something new.

"There's really no sense dwelling on what you've already done. You don't want to do it the same way every time anyway, so you just pick up and go to the next thing, and make a conscious effort to do something new, and hopefully better than what's in the past." ▼





# For one night, it's return of the living dead

EDMONTON ZOMBIE PUNKERS THE FRANKLINS ARE REUNITED (FOR A SHOW) AND IT FEELS SO GOOD

PHOTOS BY / bryan@vuweekly.com

The past two months have been exciting times for Edmonton music fans of a certain vintage. In November, the Brewtals passed the torch to the new leaders of Edmonton's garage rock scene with a couple of awe-inspiring shows, while this Sunday (Dec 17) The Franklins will reunite to remind Edmontonians just how much they have missed the zombie punk madness.

The band began at Harry Ainley High School as a cover band. Their first show for the Masses ended with a fire, making one of the most loved local events.

Figuring out how to interview members of the band is not exactly the easiest task in the world, however. Not only are they busy with various other bands, but they are also extremely hesitant to brag about their place within the scene. At times it was difficult, bassist Kenny M., lead guitarist Tyler Skidmarks, drummer and guitarist/vocalist Jonny O eventually agreed to tell me about how the band began, how it ended and what the Franklins brought to the local music community.

"It was basically like starting a band and figuring out how to play instruments at the same time," Jonny O explains. "We played staple high school heavy metal covers."

At the beginning, however, the band had trouble finding a drummer who would be committed to playing the type of punishing thrash that the band was known for. Eventually, at an

PREVIEW

SUN, DEC 17 (8:30 PM)

**THE FRANKLINS**

WITH WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES, LET'S DANCE, THRASHTIC FIBROSIS, THE SCAM  
NEW CITY, \$10 (ALL AGES)

out-of-town show, the Franklins met a 13-year-old kid named Snarf who proved to be just the committed character the band was looking for.

"I put on a show in my hometown of Bon Accord, and I'd asked these guys to play," Snarf explains. "They'd always had trouble with drummers, and I really liked them, so basically I begged them to be in the band. Since I lived in Bon Accord, my mom promised me she'd give me rides into Edmonton for practices."

**AT THIS POINT** the band really took off, playing more and higher profile shows, eventually releasing an EP entitled *Let's Get Dead* and a self-titled full-length on Edmonton's Reluctant Records. The band also developed its reputation for craziness and spontaneity, including the zombie makeup, wild stage shows and costumes. The wildest shenanigans often happened after their shows, however, usually under the influence of alcohol.

"This one time in Penfold, we were all really messed up and running down this hallway cheering," Seldom explains. "Tyler jumped out from behind a corner and sprayed us all with a fire extinguisher."

"I emptied the whole thing," Skidmarks proud-

ly exclaims.

"No one could breathe. We all had to get out," Seldom finishes.

All good things eventually come to an end, however, and by 2004 the band abruptly called it quits. Though the members tried to feed me a half-baked story about their lead guitarist's diarrhea, which they claimed hospitalized him for a year, the truth about their breakup is much more pedestrian.

"We weren't really writing songs anymore," Snarf laments.

"Our creative output didn't keep pace with us playing shows," Jonny O explains. "After a while, you don't wanna keep playing the same 10 songs."

The decision to reunite came about after Snarf's mom, the woman who was instrumental in making sure the members of the band could even be in the same city at the same time, made him some DVDs of Franklins' performances for his birthday. The band gathered to watch the shows together and apparently got to talking.

"We watched those DVDs ..." Jonny O begins.

"... and we decided to rock!" Seldom finishes.

The Franklins appear to have no idea whether the reunion is just for this show or not, saying simply that they'll see what the crowd's reaction is like and make sure they haven't grown to hate each other during the break they took before making a decision.

"It's not like [playing this music] is difficult," Skidmarks explains.

"Besides, how do you kill the undead?" Sel-

dom asks.

"Never say never," Snarf says. "If people really like it and want another one well ... I mean, we've had a lot of fun jamming."

**WHETHER OR NOT** another Franklins show is on the horizon, the band is looking forward to this Sunday, especially because it'll be an all-ages show. As Snarf explains, the band had a particular fondness for all-ages gigs because they always became the exact environment in which the Franklins could thrive: a madhouse.

"We'd play on the floor and kids would dance and fall into my drum kit all show," he says. "They were the funnest ones."

Though Seldom jokes that the Franklins have signed a "no shenanigans contract," by the end of the interview, the band was already discussing wild new ideas. You'll have to go to the show to see what they've cooked up, however, as I was informed that the ideas were off the record.

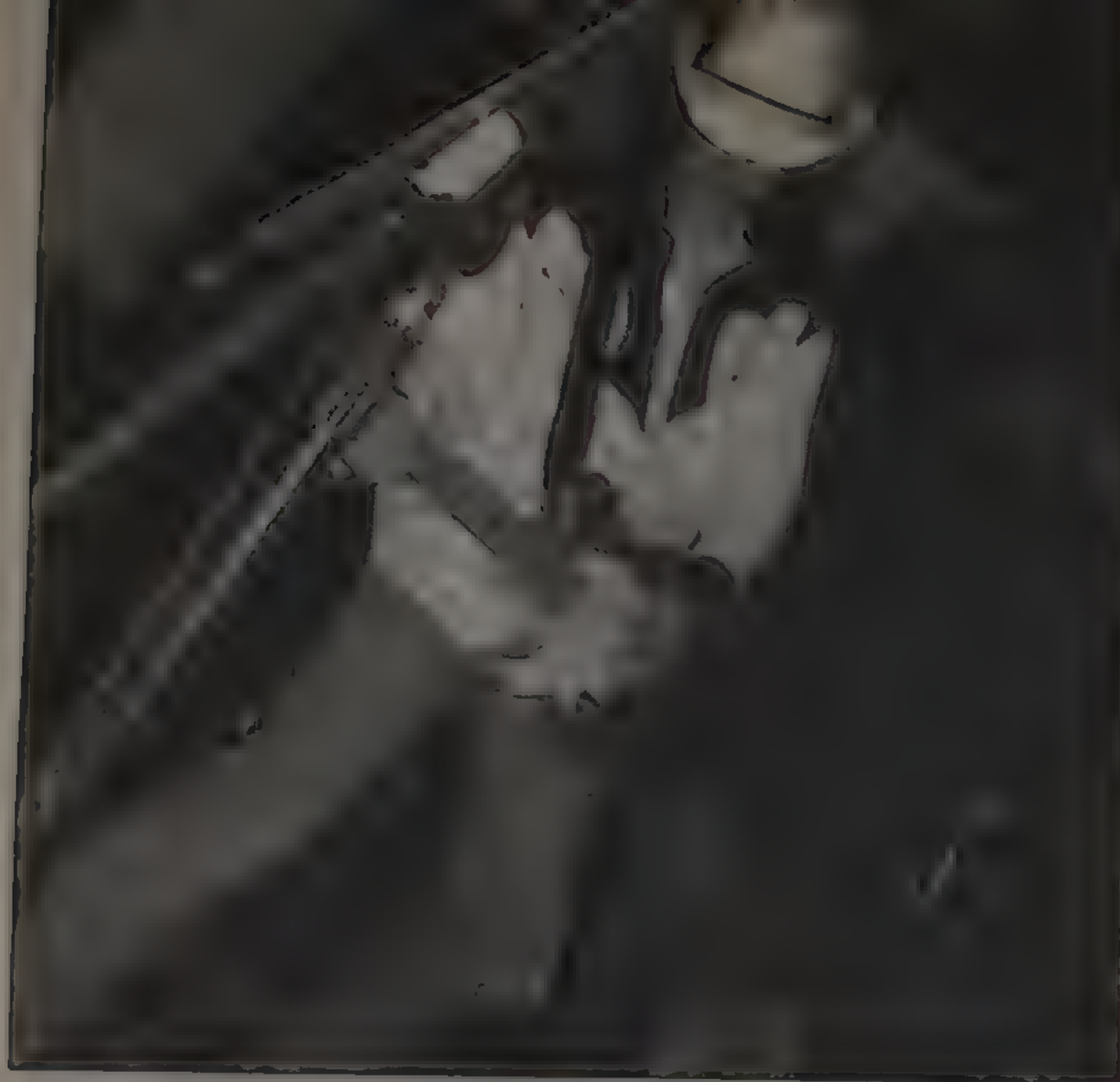
"All this is O-T-R, B-T-W," Snarf spelled out for me.

One final positive of this reunion show is that the Franklins will go out in a more positive way than they did back in 2004. With Snarf busy elsewhere, the band enlisted Darren Chewka of the Frosted Tips to fill in. Though Chewka was obviously competent, it just wasn't the same thing.

"We're leaving on a high note this time," Skidmarks says.

"Naw," disagrees Seldom. "We're leaving on a brown note. Like always." ♥





**PREVUE / WED, DEC 20 / CORDOBA / BLACK DOG, FREE** If you're looking to shed a few pounds before slipping into that glamorous cocktail dress, then come on down to the Ho Ho Ho Down at the Black Dog, where the high-energy, foot-stomping, rye-swalling local boys of Cordoba will deliver songs about the things they know best—girls, poker and drinking—to the inebriated barflies and cowboy hat-clad crowd. The trio, who are less about tear-in-their-beer country ballads and more about dirt-kicking throwdowns, really knows how to speed up the tempo and force even the laziest bore out onto the dance floor. "Cordoba is the greatest experience of my short life!" says new drummer Scott Lingley. "Be careful not to blink or you might miss a song. We play fucking fast." All evidence suggests that this will be a hoe-rific, redneck party! —TARA ZUROWSKI / [tara@vuweekly.com](mailto:tara@vuweekly.com)



## Halifax songwriter concocts a weird brew of folk and electronica

TARA ZUROWSKI / [tara@vuweekly.com](mailto:tara@vuweekly.com)

**F**ast-rising folktronica master **Rebekah Higgs** is an artist who understands the concept of musical roots, and yet she is more than willing to branch out from her origins.

"I call my debut [self titled] album folk-electronic," shares Higgs. "Which is, it's got folk roots throughout the whole album, but is also very infiltrated with new music, electronic sounds and different layering and vocal effects."

"Lyrically, I definitely draw from life's situations and politics—what's going on in the world," Higgs goes on. "Poverty, substances and anything else. 'Parables,' well, I call it my 'George Bush' song. It's about how politicians can use the media to their advantage to sort of get people to act on their behalf, so it's about how Americans convinced Americans that it was a good idea to go to war, in a very inadvertent way, very roundabout way."

**HIGGS EXPLAINS** that her desire to push the boundaries of music is a natural step for her. The 25-year-old Halifax native grew up in a family that she calls semi-artistic, but admits that even within that setting she was the weird one.

"I'm this uncontrollable artist," she says. "I don't think my family knows what to do with me. Both my parents have an innate artist in them. My mom is a real free spirit, and my dad is very creative. He's a risk taker and I think that that's where I tend to be more creative and risky with my

**PREVUE**

WED, DEC 20 (9 PM)  
**REBEKAH HIGGS**  
WITH BROCK SKYWALKER & HIS IN-  
HEARTBEATS, KRIS DEMENTOR  
SIDETRACK CAFE, \$7

music because of his i... life. And then the fr... elli, I think, comes tr... "When I got ou... Higgs continues, "I... would have to th... fully if I wanted to d... writing, recording... all kinds of things v...

"I think that wha... university as an ad... fited me as far as stat... understand what it is to captiv... audience," she continues "Al... of the theatrical theori... practice, especially i... because honesty... what attracts peopl... be a good actor, you can't... Music is the same thing... ly invent things. You have to... you've got and draw from that..."

As she tours Car... album, Higgs perform... down solo or with her band... she reaches the stage here in... ton, she'll be on her own, o... says that people will see a... side of her than they do w... with her band.

"You'll get a little... performance because... hide behind the guys... before adding, "I still find... ways to be weird. It's not regul... music." ▼

SPINX 102.9 & THE UNION PROUDLY  
PRESENT THE SECOND ANNUAL

# JINGLE BELL ROCK

## COHEED AND CAMBRIA

### Album

THE FALL OF TROY  
AND  
TEN SECOND EPIC

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102.9



# Brent Oliver plays the Swiftly card for his annual Food Bank drive

CHRISTINA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuwweekly.com  
I know it's been a long time since we played in Edmonton," ventures Grant Stovel, lanky jammer boy for maverick country-anders the Swiftys. "[But] it's not on by design. We've spent so much on the road breaching new territory, and we've tried to be careful not wear out our welcome in our metown. We like to think of it as 'stealthy non-saturation'. Somehow though, it's recently threatened to come downright neglect."

Stovel offers an apologetic shrug. "Yes—we're very happy to be playing this show." After three consecutive years of angry holiday heck-raising, local promoter Brent Oliver's annual Food Bank benefit can arguably be considered an Edmonton tradition. Raucous crowd-pleasers and sentimental curries (such as inaugural bill-topper Corb Lund in 2003) and a winter house party vibe lure homebound and homecoming Edmontonians out of self-saturated living rooms and malls and into what Oliver identifies as a "barn dance" sort of festive event. It should prove a welcoming environment into which the Swiftys can unleash some of their new material, songs from their forthcoming sophomore release, which they're recording this winter at Winnipeg's Bedside studio.

**WHAT'S THE HOLD-UP?** The Swiftys' self-titled debut roared into range in 2003, with Stovel and bassist Jody Johnson providing the rhythmic spine or Shawn "Swiftly" Jonasson's Way-on-Jennings-meets-Black-Sabbath songs, raw concoctions of backcountry woe and hard rock for the truck.

Jonasson bends his tales further with studio and synth tricks, unex-



**PREVIEW**  
FRI, DEC 15 (7 PM)  
CHRISTMAS HAYRIDE / FOOD BANK BENEFIT  
**THE SWIFTYS**  
WITH JOHN GULIAK & THE NEW LOUGANS,  
MIKE JACKSON/ALTO  
RIVERDALE HALL (9231 - 100 AVENUE),  
\$15 (FOOD BANK DONATIONS WELCOME)

pectedly spiking his proficient but weirdly adolescent axe noodling. This is the sound of rye and ginger, rec rooms with gold shag carpeting and wood paneling and working-class Christmas parties.

Stovel unfurls the excuses for their tardiness.

"Our first record was a highly spontaneous studio experience. Swiftly thrives in the studio—it's a catalyst for him. We were trying to play live a lot, and without the studio as a source of inspiration, it was difficult to write in that tradition, without the immediacy of experimentation."

"To tell the truth," he adds, "another reason it took us so long to start recording again, in a lot of ways, is that the best songs Swiftly writes come from personal anguish, and he's been happy. It's taken a while to buckle down and sort out ideas again."

Jonasson's absence of pain may be why his recent songs (listenable through the Swiftys' MySpace page) seem like musical short stories rather than anthems, even more so than on their debut.

"He writes songs about people who maybe haven't done so well," Stovel suggests. (Exhibit A is perhaps "Riding High," which sympathetically references "a waitress with sore feet" to evoke blue collar pathos.)

"This being a benefit—that it helps these people who are down on their luck—this makes it an even better show for us to play," he concludes. ▽



VIEW/FRIDAY DEC 15 (8:30 PM) / KISS KISS BANG BANG / WITH WHITEY HOUSTON  
THE BEAUTIFUL UNKNOWN / NEW CITY / \$10 Who are these jokers? Well, you'll never know unless you go, will you? Kiss Kiss Bang Bang is made up of Ross Mehedin Bass, Marcus Wren on keys and Robert Cain on drums. You ever heard of these people? Me neither. Something fishy going on here. Anyways, Cain informed me that the band is hoping to release a 7" in February that'll have four songs and will make people get up and shake it. —BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuwweekly.com

**FREECLOUD**

Classic Psych & Prog LPs in stock:  
Love, Peace & Poetry Int'l Psychedelia  
Can, Lucifer, VU, Zappa, Ugly Ducklings  
Beelheart, Blossom Toes, Gandalf, Janus

Alt / Indie LPs in stock:  
Sonic Youth, Ween, Comets on Fire, Pixies  
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Rufus Wainwright, Atom & Pkg, Wire

Rare & original LPs new in stock:  
999, Clash, Redd Foxx, KTSS, Damned, U2  
Madness, English Beat, UK Subs, Dickies  
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Elvis Costello, Nirvana, Miles Davis  
Madonna, Gen X, Devo, Police & more!

**RECORDS**

10764 101st ph: 429-1478

**WHITEY HOUSTON**  
**THE BEAUTIFUL UNKNOWN**  
**KISS KISS BANG BANG**  
Friday December 15 NEW CITY

**The Burnin' Santa Klaus**

**OVER UNDER & THROUGH**

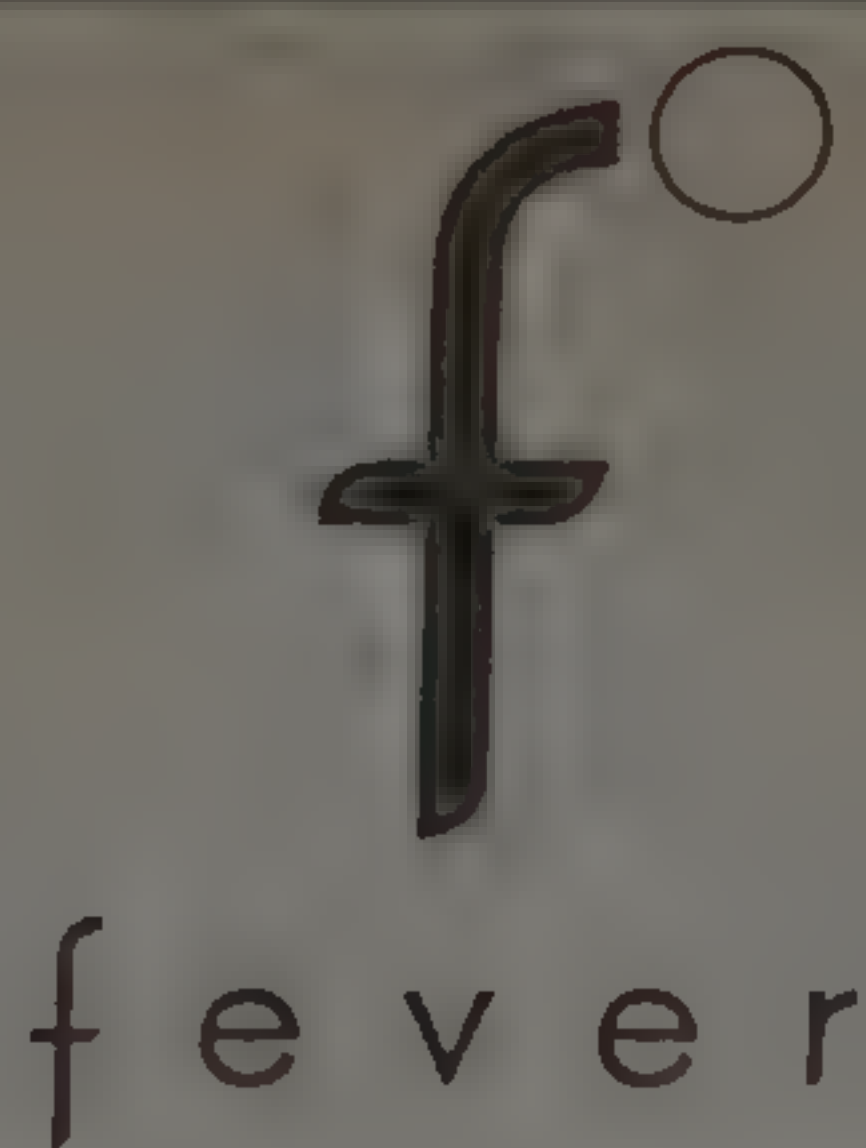
**December 20th**

**SHOW STARTS AT 10:00**

**DOOR \$5**

**NEW CITY**





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SATURDAY NIGHTS

# SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER

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WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

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\$6 TRIPLES  
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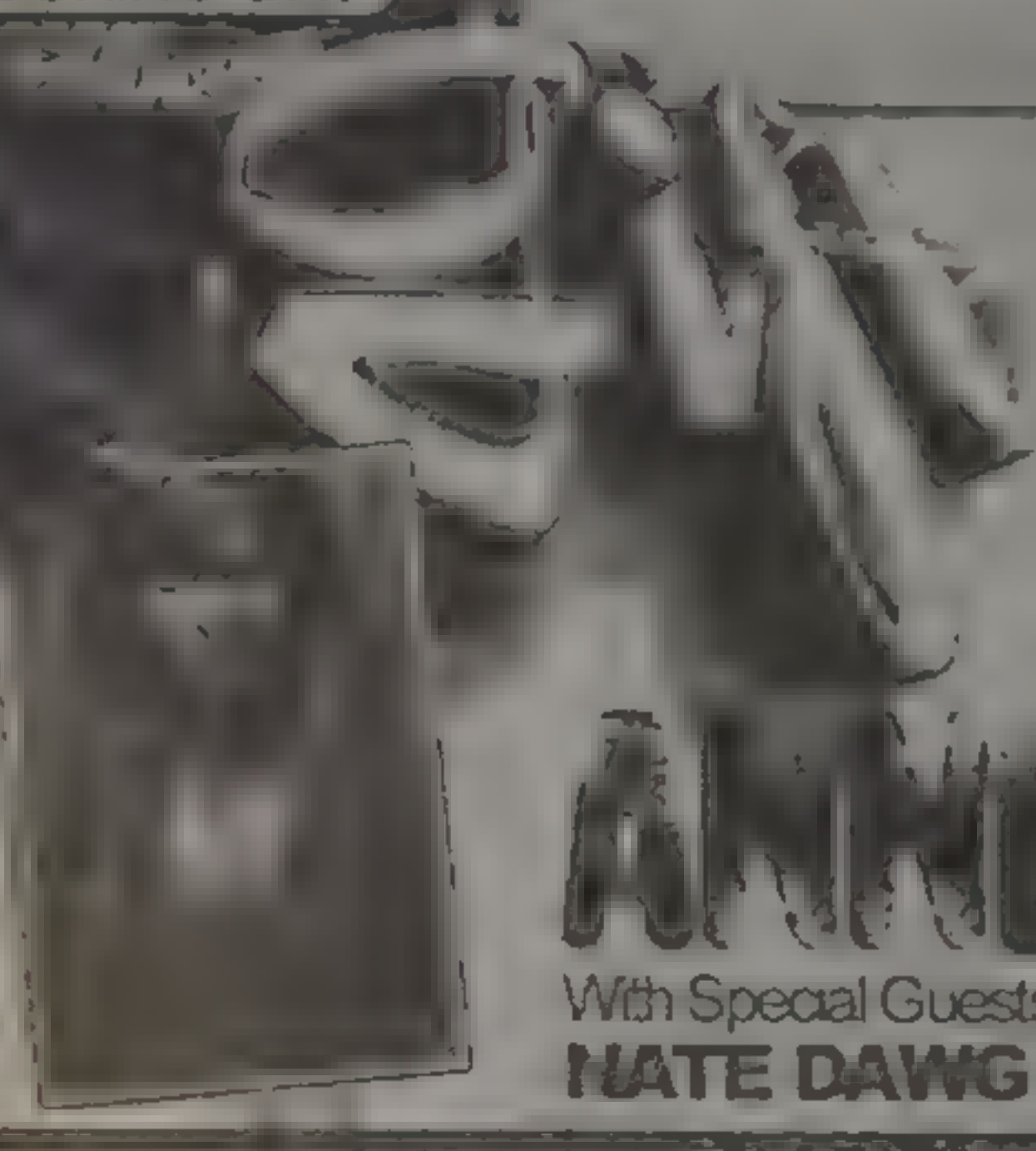
GLOBAL FRIDAYS

WESTERN CANADA'S #1  
FRIDAY NIGHT PARTY  
1500 PEOPLE!  
HIP HOP, REGGAE  
BASS & MORE

Friday  
December 15th  
**SNOOP DOGG**  
CD Release Party

December 22nd  
**NAS** CD Release Party

BOXING DAY



On December 26th, 2006 - Boodang, United Productions, Red Bull, and Fever Nightclub, team up to bring you a Christmas party so HUGE, we had to book one of the worlds biggest DJs just to show how much we appreciate our customers. The best part of all - admission is absolutely FREE!

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LISTINGS FOR YOU

# MUSIC WEEKLY

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE WE HAVE  
OUR NEW SCHEDULE OF  
LISTINGS ON OUR WEBSITE  
DEADLINE IS FRIDAY AT 3 PM

## THU LIVE MUSIC

**ARDEN THEATRE** Nutcracker Suite Featuring PJ Perry and Bill Mays with the Toronto Chamber Jazz Septet, 7:30pm, \$30 at the Arden Theatre box office, TicketMaster

**BACKDRAUGHT PUB** Open stage, 9pm

**CHRISTMAS EVE'S PARTY PUB** Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude, 6-10pm

**DRUID** Open mic hosted by Chris Wynters every Tue, 9pm

**DUSTER'S PUB** Jam hosted by Brian Petch

**FESTIVAL PLACE** Michelle Wright (country, Christmas concert), 7:30pm, \$32 (cabaret)/\$30 (box)/\$28 (theatre) at the Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

**FOUR ROOMS** Anna Beaumont, 8pm

**THE IVORY CLUB** Live Dueling Pianos, no cover, 8pm

**JAMMERS PUB** Thursday open jam, 7-11pm

**JACK DAWG** Open stage with the Poster Boys (pop/rock/blues), 8:30pm-12:30am

**NORTH COUNTRY HALL** Organized by the Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers Society, 7-10pm

**OBYRNE'S** SlowBurn (blues/rock), 9:30pm-12am, Toy drive for Santa's Anonymous

**SIDETRACK CAFE** The Kokanee Comedy Battle, 9pm, \$3 (door)

**URBAN LOUNGE** Ormus, 9pm-2am, \$5 (door)

**WILLY WEST SALOON**

**WUNDERBAR** Tippy Agogo Jam session with Louie and Karan (Eshodibwizal), 9:30pm, \$5

### DJS

**BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE** Escapade Entertainment

**BLACK DOG** Open stage, 9pm, \$5

**BUDDY'S** Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ West Coast BabyDaddy

**ESMERALDA'S** Big and Rich Thursday top 40, country

**HEATH MONSIEUR'S** Bingo with DJ S W A G

**LUCKY BUDS** White Ape Requests with DJ Damian

**GAS PUMP** Ladies Nite Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

**SHOCK** Thursdays with Urban Substance Sound Crew, InVincible ShortRound, SpinCycle, BabyGul, and Touch It

**THE BAR** Mark Stevens, 9pm

**NEW CITY**

**ON THE ROCKS** Salsa and the City 9:30pm dance lessons, Cuban salsa DJ to follow

**OVERTIME** Retro to New classic rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee 9pm-2am, no cover

**RED STAR** Fatal rock pop hip hop with DJ Jaxxon

**THE ROOST** Gorgeous featuring hostess Dr. Lexou Tronic, Drag Kings and Queens, burlesque and rotating game shows, bands upstairs monthly

**STANDARD** DJ Danny Howells (UK) tickets available at TicketMaster Treehouse, Underground (WEM)

**VELVET UNDERGROUND** VJCM: Electro, techno, no wave, hip hop with DJ Nik 7, 8pm (door)

**WUNDERBAR** Kelly and Jan Sweet Brit and punk with Phillip and Bogner

## FRI LIVE MUSIC

**AVENUE SKATEPARK** Riff Randels Twin Fangs, Michael Rault and the Mixed Signals, Ben Disaster, The Meat Cleavers; all ages event, \$10

**BACKDRAUGHT PUB** McQuig 9:30pm, \$5

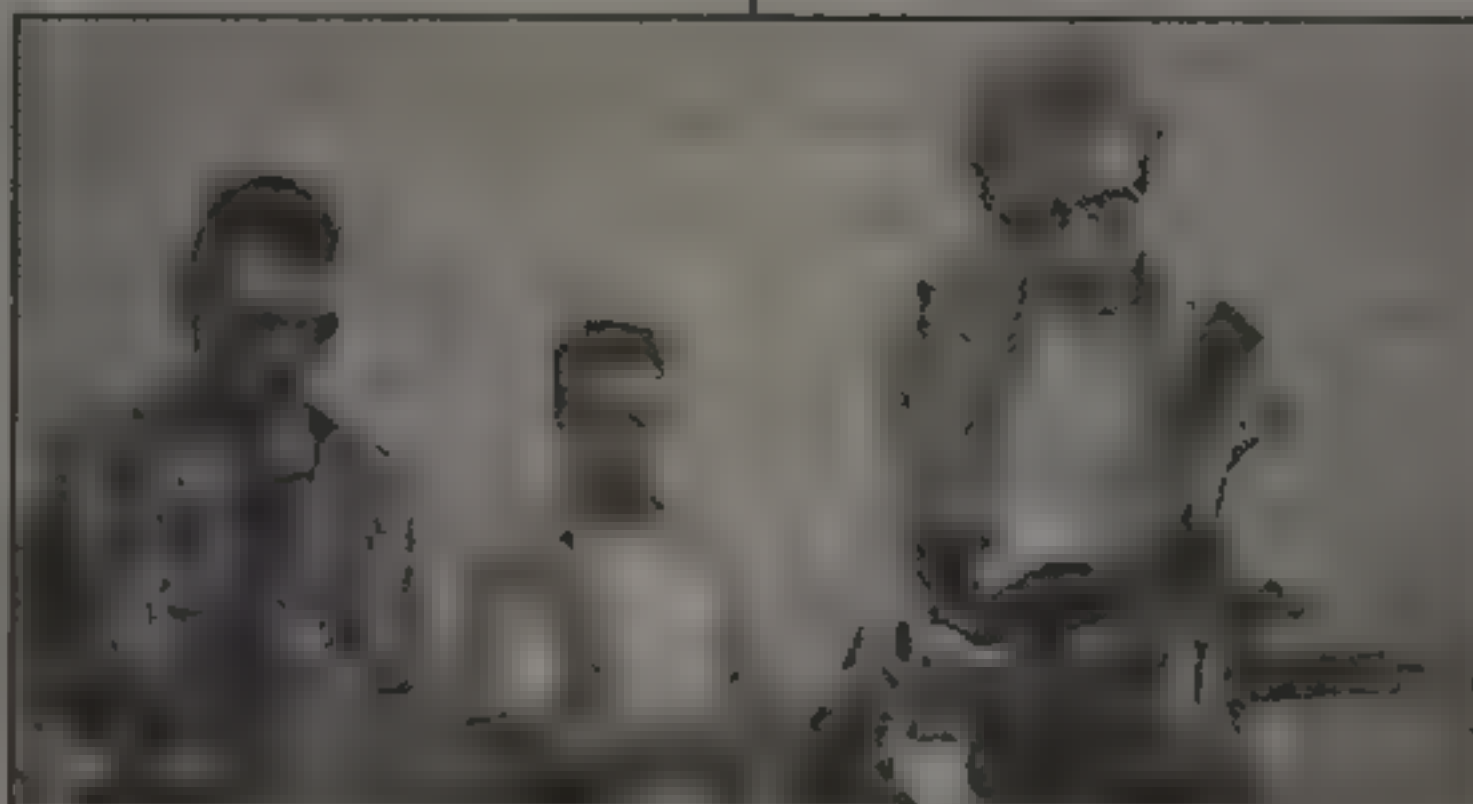
**BLUE CHAIR CAFE** Darren Johnson, 8:30pm, \$8

**CASINO EDMONTON** Ali Bright (country/rock)

**CASINO YELLOWHEAD** The Emeralds (folk)

**CONVOCATION HALL** Diana Stabel (CD release party), 8pm, \$10 (adv) at TIX on the Square, \$14 (door)

**COWBOYS** Chris Cummings, 8pm, \$12 (adv)/\$15 (door) at TicketMaster, Cowboys box office



**PREVUE / WED, DEC 20 (9 PM) / THE BURNIN SANDS / NEW CITY / \$5** If I'm not mistaken, and I hardly ever am, these guys are Teenage Surf Invasion minus that nasty dude who kept offering me "moustache rides." Oh god, now I feel dirty.

**DALE'S PUB** Lucky (blues/roots) 9:30pm-1:30am, \$5

**DJ'S PUB-MORINVILLE** Dennis Ficar and Johnny Burtons (country/rock-a-billy), 9pm, no cover

**FEVER NIGHT CLUB** Global Fridays

**FOUR ROOMS** Anna Beaumont 9pm, \$5

**FRESH START CAFE** Britz

**HORIZON STAGE** George Fox, Marlee Scott (country), 7:30pm, \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior) at Horizon Stage box office TicketMaster; sold out

**THE IVORY CLUB** Live Dueling Pianos, no cover, 9pm

**JAMMERS PUB** 9-2am

**JEFFREYS CAFE** Sandy Foster (jazz), \$7

**JEXXIL AND HYDE PUB** (pop/rock), 9:30pm

**NEW CITY** Whitley Houston, The Beautiful Unknown, no minors, 8pm \$10 (door)

**ON THE ROCKS** Hearts, DJ Shawnibis

**RED STAR** Hayride/Food Bank Benefit: The Swifys, John Gulak and the New Lougans, Mike McDonald, 7pm (door); limited tickets available at Blackbyrd Myozic & Megatunes bring a donation for the Food Bank

**SHOCK** Jingle Bell Rock, Atreyu, Coheed And Cambria, Ten Second Epic, The Fall Of Troy; all ages event with licensed beer gardens, 7pm (door) \$39.50 at Unionevents.com, TicketMaster; portion of proceeds to the Edmonton Youth Emergency Shelter Society

**SIDETRACK CAFE** Raygun Cowboys The Firebrands, The B Movies, 9pm, \$10 (door)

**STARLITE ROOM** Jingle Bell Rock Afterparty, Starlite members Christmas appreciation Party Murder City Sparrows, Ellis, DJ Generi Hipster Twister, no minors, 8pm (door); free for Starlite Room members

**URBAN LOUNGE** Crush, 9pm-2am \$5 (door)

**WILLY WEST SALOON**

### CLASSICAL

**ARDEN THEATRE** The St. Albert Women's Vocal Ensemble presented by the St. Albert Singers Guild, 8pm, \$15 by phone at 459-7494 or 488-2043

**WINDYFAX CENTRE** Edmonton Public Schools Gift and choral ensembles will be interspersed with seasonal readings from students, Keri Lynn Zwicker (harp), 7:30pm, \$10 at TIX on the Square

### DJS

**BACKDRAUGHT PUB** D'n'B/house/breaks with Degree, Phatcat, Neal K, Shortee, Sweetz and more

**BLACK DOG** Fridays, local house music with DJs and occasional international special guest DJ, 9pm (door), \$5 (door)

**BAR-B-BAR** DJ James, no cover

**BAR WILD** Bar Wild Fridays

**BOOTS** Retro Disco: retro dance

**BUDDY'S** We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm

request with a mix of retro and disco, 7pm-12 midnight: \$6 (\$4 rental/pair)

**STOLL'S** Top 40, R&B, house with Blackbyrd and DJ

**STONEHOUSE PUB** Top 40 with DJ Tysin

**TRACHT AFTERHOURS** Flashback: house/hard with Johnny Dangerous, Andy Inertia, guests, 1-7am

**URBAN FRAT** All New Funktion Fridays: Free Reggae CD giveaways all night with Toronto's DJ Phat Kat, Edmonton Police security on site

**VELVET UNDERGROUND** Merry Xmas Party: Rocktronica with DJs Chocolate Beatz, Shyne, no minors; \$3 (door); free cover with a \$2 donation to Wind Women's Shelter

**WUNDERBAR** Beam Team

**Y AFTERHOURS** Foundation Fridays

## SAT LIVE MUSIC

**AVENUE SKATEPARK** Hot Panda, LevelSixEels, MissingInAction, all ages event, \$5

**BACKDRAUGHT PUB** Axiomatix 9:30pm, \$5

**BLACK DOG** the Dog, 4-6pm

**BLUE CHAIR CAFE** Bill Werthman Invitational Open Stage, 8pm, donations

**CASINO EDMONTON** Ali Bright (country/rock)

**CASINO YELLOWHEAD** The Emeralds (folk)

**DRUID (JASPER AVE)** Open stage, all ages; 2-6pm

**FRONT PORCH** 9pm, \$5

**HOMEGROWN SOUL SHACK** Sat top rap groups, 5pm

**HORIZON STAGE** George Fox, Marlee Scott (country), 7:30pm and 2pm, \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior) at Horizon Stage box office, TicketMaster

**THE IVORY CLUB** Live Dueling Pianos, no cover, 9pm

**JAMMERS PUB** Saturday open jam, 3-7:30pm: country/rock band, 9pm-2am



**PREVUE / FRI, DEC 15 (6 PM) / ELECTROLLS / WHITE-MUD CROSSING LIBRARY / \$10 / ALL AGES** Electrolls is the name for this electronic music event featuring Holzkopf, Clicker and Comaduster. Even better than electronic music are those cute and fuzzy little trolls!

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Hypnotic Friday Breakbeat, house, progressive and electro with Groovy Cuvy, DJ Fuuze

**NEW CITY** Das Oontz: Techno, industrial, trance with DJ Dervish and the Groovinator, 9pm (door)

**ONE ON WHYTE** Friday Nights: DJ Choklit Elvis and DJ Spyder

**OVERTIME** House and pop: indie rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee, 9pm-2am, no cover

**RED STAR** Loaded Friday: indie rock and Brit pop with DJ Readymade Flyboy

**THE ROOST** All Request Dance Party with DJ Jazzy

**RUM JUNGLE** Peoples DJ Spinning

**SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE** Deep House with Friday resident DJ Luke Morrison

**SPORTSWORLD** The Line and Rollerskating Disco Top 40

**JEFFREYS CAFE** Smooth Jazz Trio (funky jazz), \$7

**JEXXIL AND HYDE PUB** Headwind (pop/rock), 9:30pm

**MORANGO'S** Open mic hosted by Tommy every Sat, 7pm

**O'BYRNE'S** On the Patio: Chris Wynters, Scott Peters, 3pm, no cover

**ON THE ROCKS** Hearts, DJ Shawnibis

**PEPPER'S SPORTS BAR AND GRILL** 5th Annual Drunken Elf & Santa Tickle: Dangerous Guise, 7pm (door), 10pm (band)

**QUEEN ALEXANDRA HALL** Edmonton Blues Society monthly live blues, Doghouse Blues, 8pm-12, \$5 (door); www.edmontonblues.org

**SIDETRACK CAFE** Big River (ex-Knee Deep in Grass and Funktion), The Swill Kings, 9pm, \$10 (door)

**STARLITE ROOM** Long Way Down (CD release party), Cocksaw

**CRUISE** Minor's \$4 door; tickets at TicketMaster, Blackbyrd and T

**URBAN LOUNGE** \$5 (door)

**VELVET UNDERGROUND** Down (CD release), Bill Werthman, 8pm, \$10 (door); adv \$5; tickets at TicketMaster, Room and Ve

**WILD WEST SALOON**

**ZACKS ON WEST AVENUE**

### CLASSICAL

**ARDEN THEATRE** Christmas: A Christmas Carol, 7:30pm, \$15 or call 454-7494

**ARDEN THEATRE** Wonderful Time: The St. Albert Women's Vocal Ensemble, 8pm, \$15 by phone at 459-7494 or 488-2043

**DOW CENTENNIAL CENTRE-FORT BASKATCHEWAN** Christmas Cheers: Mill Creek Band, Dr. Malcolm, 7:30pm, \$10 (door); tickets at TicketMaster, Dow Centre box office 947-5676

**MILLWOOD FELLOWSHIP** Moore and Inverdi, 8pm, \$5 (door); phone at 454-7494

**WINDYFAX CENTRE** Eaton's Christmas: The Eaton's Christmas Spectacular, 7:30pm, \$10 (door); tickets at TicketMaster, Windyfax Centre box office 454-7494

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 St. Albert  
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 • WUNDERBAR  
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**BAR WILD** Bar Gone Wild Mondays: Service Industry Night; no minors, 9pm-2am

**BUDDY'S** Free pool and tourney, D. Arrowchaser

**ESMERALDA'S** Top 40, country, R8 with DJ Foreplay, DJ Jimmy

**FUNKY BUDDHA** (Whyte Ave) Late

**DIY Wednesdays.** The B-Movies  
Over Hordes and Through: The Burn

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# Want to know about the stoned Stones? Ask Greenfield when he's 10 feet tall

eden@vancouverweekly.com  
The Rolling Stones' *Exile on Main St* is an album that long entered the upper echelons of mythic rock 'n' roll masterpieces, hearing and trampling all tones of Chuck Berry-esque roll, country ballads, gospel music, with drugs—chiefly in that guitarist Keith Richards was devouring—pumping the album's veins and in the tumbling grooves of its 18 tracks.

The ragged, tortured nature of *Exile*, it seems only that the creation of the album made for a fantastic rock 'n' roll excess. It also seems that journalist Robert Greenfield should be the one to take the journey into the album, having accompanied the band on tour in 1972, chronicling events in *STP: A Journey Through America with the Rolling Stones* and capturing the madness of the tour that pervaded the recordings. In that sense, Greenfield had his pulse on what was going on in 1972. It is one thing to be remembered as a chronicler in hushed tones, but to be remembered as a chronicler who boasts is also the actual point. What made *Exile* was the fact that it was right there as the band was around.

UNFORTUNATELY, GREENFIELD'S new book *Exile on Main St: A Season in Hell with the Rolling Stones* doesn't come with the visual punch of *STP*. The author follows the band's structured tour to the story, but into a prologue, and the aftermath.

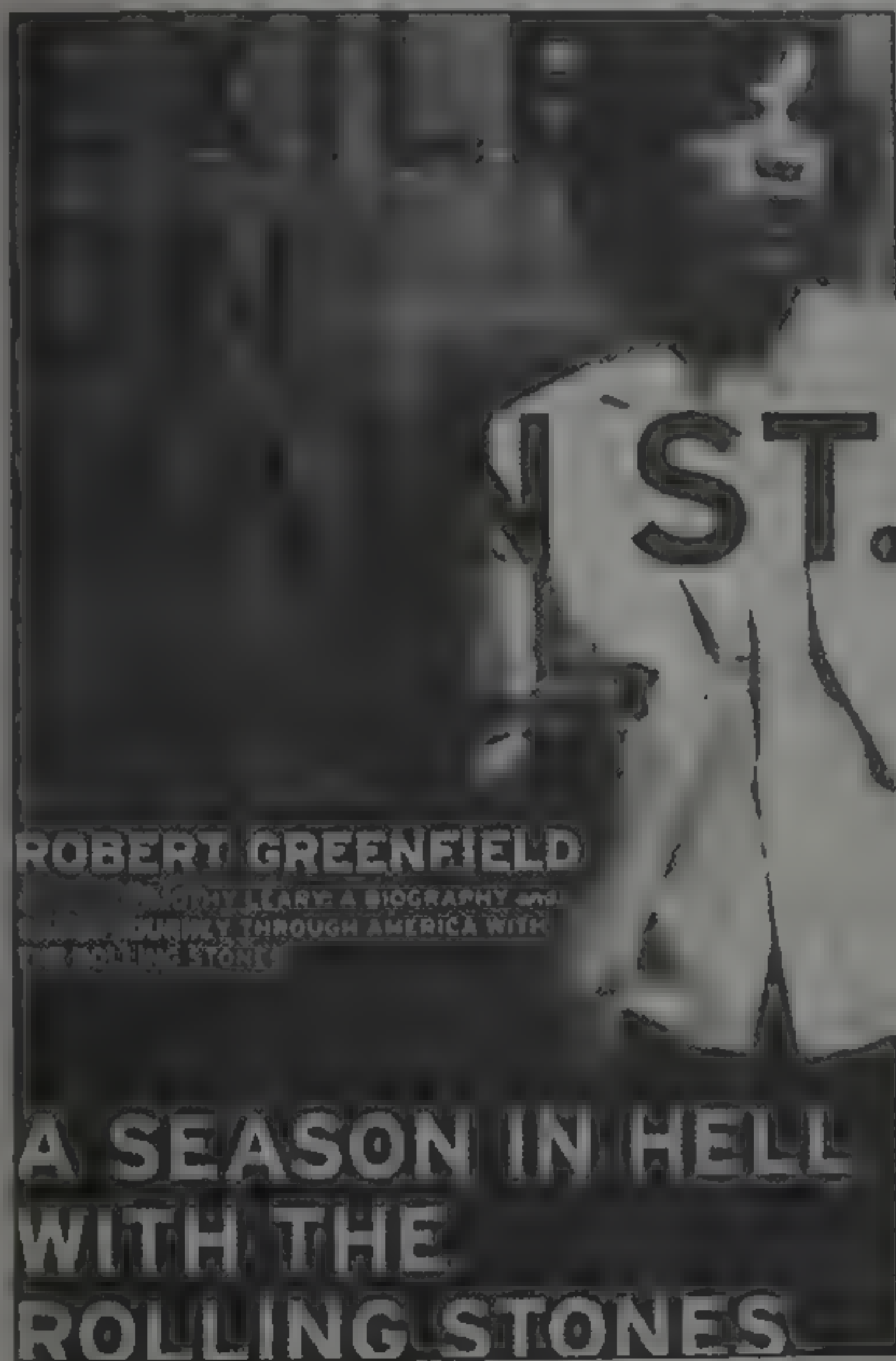
In this organization, the band is largely concerned with the fact that the tour was off of heroin. Richards was off of heroin in France, only to be back into using as the band was flowing freely around the world, followed by the hangers-on who followed wherever he was. There is some mention of the banding and release of the album, but much of what would be the story ends up in the background while the focus is on Richards's drug use. The best problem with the book

ROCK

BY ROBERT GREENFIELD  
**EXILE ON MAIN ST:  
A SEASON IN HELL WITH  
THE ROLLING STONES**  
DA CAPO PRESS, \$29

is that so much of Greenfield's time is spent pulling gossip from the mouths of others. He openly derides the info in a book written by Tony Sanchez—best remembered as the dealer who worked his way into the band's inner circle by providing a steady supply of dope—and then proceeds to constantly draw from the same book, forever explaining just why Sanchez had the events all wrong.

That in itself might be fine if Greenfield ever managed to get past the rumour-mongering of the Greenfield-said/Sanchez-said approach. Sadly, though, he doesn't, and the book engages in a repetitive grind that leaves the music on the back-



burner throughout.

While the book is lacking in its vision of the artistic process, the album itself may ultimately be better served by Greenfield's tendency to indulge in hearsay and gossip surrounding the characters rather than the music itself; *Exile on Main St* is an album that, were the truth of its creation known and truly understood, would likely lose much of the mythological luster that surrounds it.

Better that the music is left alone to exist in a foggy world of half-truths and deceptions than to reveal the self-indulgences that plagued the recording sessions. ▼

# He came from a land down under

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vancouverweekly.com

Usually the first show by a new band plays out in the same way; a group of friends decide to start a band, they practice for awhile, maybe play some battles of the bands or open stages, then they play their first real show. Not so with ICBMs.

Lead singer Sean the Bastard ("Just call me Bastard, everyone else does") came to Edmonton all the way from Australia to be with his "other half," but wasn't about to give up being in a punk band. In his hometown of Darwin, Bastard was the lead singer of a popular band called Plonker.

"I wouldn't call us successful," he says, "but we got signed, and we did some national tours."

As Bastard explains, this experience came in handy when he decided he wanted to start a band here in Canada. Joining forces with Jim Nowhere on guitar, Phildo on bass and Jesus Christ Mike on drums, Bastard will likely add a new element to the city's scene.

"I think I know what I like," he says. "Far too many musicians are under the mistaken impression that they're artists. We're not artists, we're a punk fucking rock band."

**BEING A PUNK** fucking rock band, ICBMs' lyrical content is somewhat political, but also totally cheeky. Bastard explains that he's trying to keep the lyrics funny but also mean-



PREVIEW

SAT. DEC 16 (6 PM)  
**THE ICBMS**  
WITH ASS, HOT PANDA, LEVEL SIX ELFS,  
MISSTHORN WIGTUN  
AVENUE SKATEPARK (9030-118 AVENUE),  
\$5 (ALL AGES)

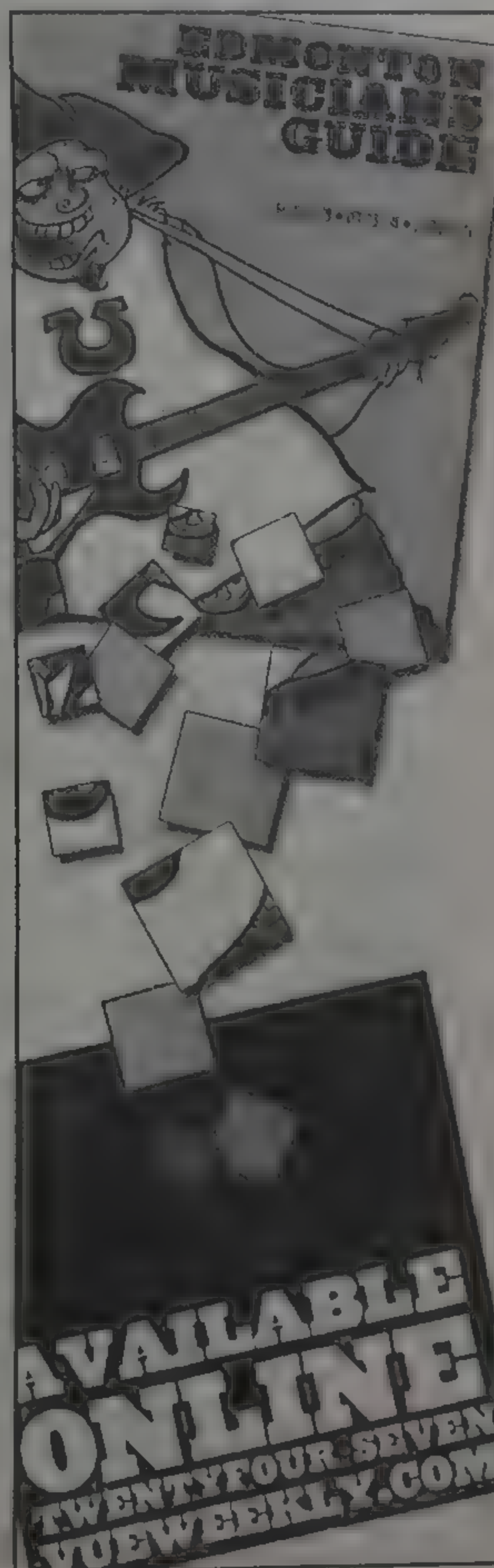
ingful, while trying to avoid the juvenile humour he often employed in his youth.

"I'm trying to get away from the fart and dick jokes," he says while insisting that the band is not too

serious. "We're not Propagandhi. I'm sick of hearing bands whine and bitch. We're trying to avoid being PC wanker types."

The ICBMs have some plans for the future, but Bastard says right now they're focusing on playing well at their upcoming show, though he stresses that they play primarily for their own enjoyment.

"You can enjoy us, or you can fuck off!" he snarls, kind of laughing at the same time. ▼





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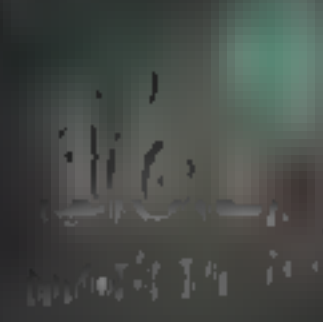
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# ndy and Long Way Down pumped Trying Times are behind them

Next time Edmonton Chief Mike Boyd forms force to deal with late-ice on Whyte Avenue, should ask Jakk Grandy of St Albert-based Down. Grandy is plenty when asked about aboing pandemic. "Much shit going on," in the news, and it so distant and far off, pen right in your own

Il acquainted with ly, having lost a friend in what he describes dy circumstances." In his, Grandy has penned k Of It All" on Long debut recording *Trying*

dark inspiration, ted to be discussing coming CD release

**PREVIEW** SAT, DEC 16 (8 PM)  
**LONG WAY DOWN**  
WITH COCKSAW, CHYSUGA  
STARLITE ROOM, \$14-\$18

party at long last.

"We've been in preproduction for the last two years," he recalls. "The recording process ended up taking much longer than we anticipated."

The end result of that rather lengthy process, however, is an album that Grandy is obviously proud of. The disc includes a guest appearance by studio drummer Kenny Aronoff, who has previously worked with such bands as the Rolling Stones, John Mellencamp and the Smashing Pumpkins. Grandy describes working with Aronoff as phenomenal and better than anything he could have imagined, explaining that Aronoff came into contact with the band through a series of drum clinics at Mother's Music, where several band members

work.

**WHILE GRANDY ALLOWS** that Aronoff's talent on the record did create significant expectations for their live show, he says that drummer Nathan Kidd has risen to the task.

"Nathan took the challenge head on," he explains. "I think if you ask anyone who has seen us live, you hear that there's nothing lost from the recording."

And now that the record is finally ready for release, Grandy even manages to sound somewhat blasé about it.

"Recording is great, but playing live is what really takes the ticket," he exclaims. "We really are a live band."

"The goal has always been to make a sustainable living at playing music," he continues. "I feel like it's within an attainable reach right now; we've got the right people together that are willing to sacrifice to make it happen. 2007 is going to be a big year for us." ▼

# Somerville set to heat up ESO's annual Christmas concert with her cheer

SARAH CHAN / sarah@vviewweekly.com

**C**hristmas shopping is difficult to avoid. Once you factor in angry parking lot fever and the throngs of foes that are ripping boxes off shelves, the good old season of eating great food, reconnecting with friends and enjoying some down time with the family seem worlds away

Local actress and singer Sheri Somerville digs Christmas in a big way. The real kind of Christmas—the one that's less about how many trips to Wal-Mart one makes and more about appreciating your friends and family. For Somerville, the icing on the cake arrived early this season when our Edmonton Symphony Orchestra asked her to host its **Community Christmas Concert**.

"That's just about the best thing they could ask me to do!" Somerville enthuses. "I love Christmas songs. To sing them at the Winspear, are you kidding? That's just fun!"

As a regular guest of the symphony, Somerville knows her way around the Winspear stage, but she is doubly excited about the opportunity to share some feel-good carols with an audience sing-a-long, complete with tap dancers from Victoria School of Performing and Visual Arts.

"What Christmas represents for me is down time, a break from political work and a break from work," Somerville explains. "It's a time where I decorate my home and invite people over. I always think of Christmas as a big time to reconnect with your friend and the focus is really on connecting with people you love and want in your world. Even wars tend to slow down over the holiday season. People are cognizant about what it's supposed to mean, and they

**PREVIEW** MON, DEC 18 (7 PM)  
**ESO COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT**  
CONDUCTED BY PETAR DUNOJERSKI  
SINGING BY SHERI SOMERVILLE  
TAP DANCERS FROM VICTORIA SCHOOL OF PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS  
WINSPEAR, \$9.50-\$32

will put down their guns for a few moments."

Somerville may be aware of the season's influence on the politics of the world, but she still loves the small things. "I just love getting an invitation to a Christmas party," she divulges. "It's about wine, cheese and chocolate!"

**SELF-DESCRIBED AS** an incredibly shy child, the once anxious and paranoid young girl now stars in *Die-Nasty!* at the Varscona every week, sings with symphonies, travels around the world, writes songs and records albums. Somerville credits the years of positive words and support for the successes throughout a career that is constantly evolving and bringing her new challenges

"I'm a journeyman," she admits. "I have a thirst for new experiences that I cannot deny."

Proud to be part of the Edmonton arts scene, Somerville is continually thankful to the community here that has become her family, and she's looking forward to doing Christmas justice with less Wal-Mart and more carols and holiday cheer

"I'm totally into gathering people around!" she laughs. "I'll host them and we'll have a nice traditional, warm Christmas experience with the symphony and some beautiful arrangements." ▼

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W/ DJS CHOCOLATE BEATZ &amp; SHYNE PLAYING ALL THE ROCKTRONICA

THURSDAY DECEMBER 21

## NRMLS WLCM XMS PRTY

FRIDAY DECEMBER 22

## NOTEBOOK MAGAZINE LAUNCH PARTY

WITH HECTOR FECTOR / CHRISTIAN HANSEN / AA SOUND SYSTEM / RADIOVACANA

SATURDAY DECEMBER 23

## THE SHITTY GIFT X-CHANGE

DJ GENERIC &amp; KHALIB &amp; GUESTS (PLUS PICTURES WITH SANTA!)

FRIDAY DECEMBER 29

BLAZING VIOLETS  
WITH PIND

SATURDAY DECEMBER 30

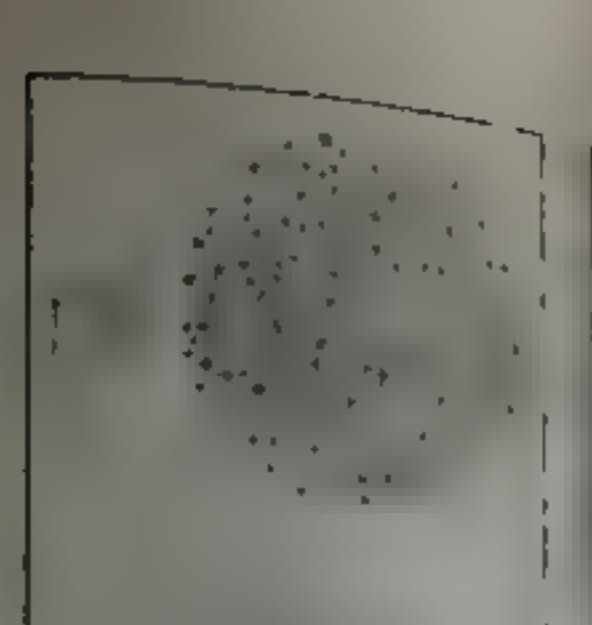
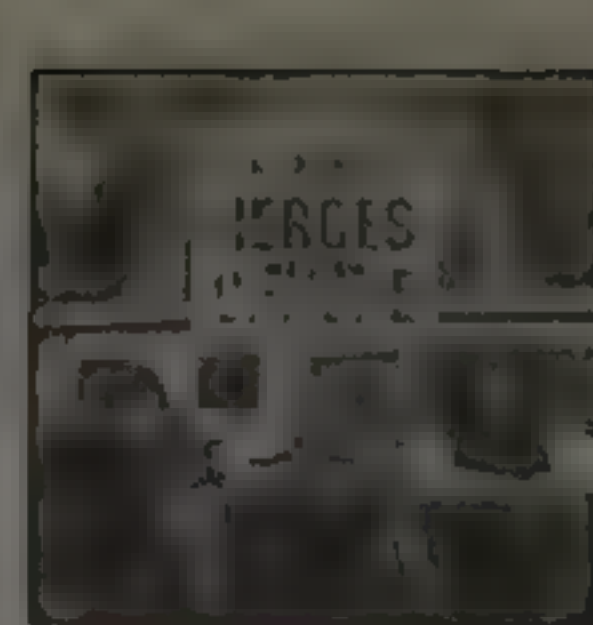
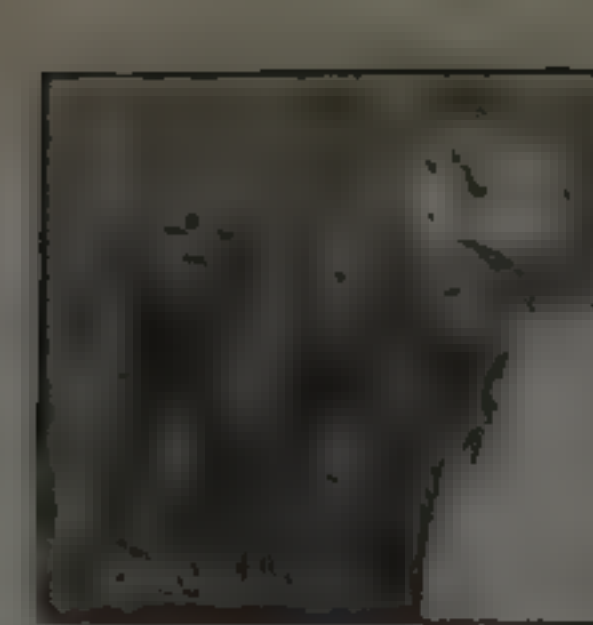
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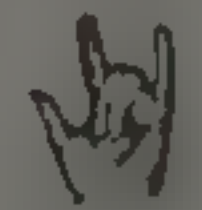
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ALBUM REVIEWS

NEW  
SOUNDSPOLITIC LIVE  
ADAPTATION

MUSIC FOR MAVERICKS ENTERTAINMENT

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuweekly.com



THIS ROCKS

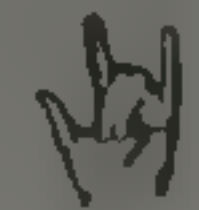
It doesn't take long for Politic Live's sophomore release to grab you, but it's more with a quietly intense urgency than with a by-the-throat freakout. True to its title, *Adaptation* is something that grows on you, a second skin that you didn't realize that you were missing. And when the reggae beats of the opening track smoothly move into the R & B-influenced "Throw Back" before shaking you awake with "The Matinee," somewhere inside you remember how solid these three local MCs are at what they do.

Always the conscious rappers and citizens, Dirt Gritie, Young Mav and Bigga Nolte also manage to avoid being preachy by dousing their rhymes with infectious beats and instrumentation, delivering layered and fully realized tracks that span their different influences. Like the first few tracks, the album volleys between dancehall to funk to slow-movers in a way that's organic but not ordinary. And when you do start to groove on the words, you find the trio at times being silly but at others playing to their biggest strength—putting themselves in the shoes of the sorts of people who we tend to pass over with a few disparaging words. By the time the album weaves its way to one of the final and strongest tracks, "Travels with Akeem," you're on Politic Live's team, looking at things a little differently.

ZION I & THE GROUCH  
HEROES IN THE CITY OF DOPE

OM

MIKE GARTH / michael@vuweekly.com



THIS ROCKS

From beginning to end, this collaboration between members of Oakland's hot underground rap scene offers a top-quality debut full-length. Zion I, the Grouch and beat master Amplitude set out to cover an array of styles, pulling each one off with success.

The album opens with "Hit'em," fitting the Hyphy hip-hop mould to perfection, with production to match "Trigger," a no-bullshit reggae track that samples the Clash is equally impressive. Everything in between is just as good; the beats are mixed with clever samples and live instrumentation, while socially and politically conscious lyrics flow over top. It's a fresh change from the desperate, bleak social views spouted by so many rappers.

*Heroes in the Genre of Rap* may have been a more appropriate title. Forget the Eminems and 50 Cents—this is rap music at its finest.

VARIOUS ARTISTS  
PLAGUE SONGS

4AD

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com



THIS IS OK

It seems odd that when the "leaders of the free world"—take your pick of words to quibble with in that phrase; except for "of the" they all invite antagonism—are hurtling us towards the Book of Revelations as fast as their little prayer-folded hands can take us, a collective of British artist types devised a project that looks to Exodus as a social metaphor.

For specifics on Atlanta Exodustravaganza raphy exhibition! (It's a film!), mosey over to the teexodus.org website, which consists of a series of ditties—one for each step in proper Biblical fashion—hapless Egyptians' flight from the land.

*Plague Songs* is bedeviled with the criticism of a Wim Wenders swinging between a pretension of intellect and a cence of realized pleasure.

Contributors include son, voice barely and a of creepy strings and melody. Stephen Merritt's "ing of Lice" is all the doomy vocals play a lice, in pair-a

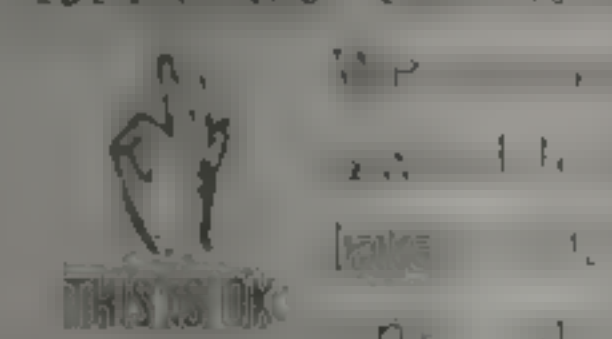
Clearly, this is a No tail will be when & Robert Wyatt's constructed a Scott Walker's "Duke evokes gospel call-and-possessed Muppet.

But as a conceit, it's interesting on—played by

VARIOUS ARTISTS  
BRATS ON THE BEAT

BRATON THE BEAT

GO KAT!



devoted entire ones out the stylings of the ask? "Please

lullaby piece that's the v good news album have st originals, with ute band the Gabb ing through from their friends of Death M demonstrating th and reveren bass and drums in

The vocals are of guest stars—Bret Donnas and Jim Lind wise among hen bunch of little the background that kids like hearing ing noise. If that makes a couple to go out and spend on the real deal, then good thing. As music its own, though, you're sticking with the originals

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sufjan stevens: songs for christmas 5CD | pixies: loudQUIETloud DVD | gift certificates  
wire: pink flag/chairs missing/154 LPs | posters | neko case: live from austin DVD  
john fahey: sea changes & coelacanth 4LP/2CD | v/a: nuggets boxset 2LP/4CD  
pavement: wovwee zowee 2CD | tortoise: a taxon lazarus 3CD+DVD | record bags  
tom waits: orphans 3CD box | t-shirts | in like flynt/ our man flynt OST LPs | & more  
get here quick on bus # 3, 5, or 135 west from downtown or the #7 north from the southside



# Just the facts, please, the VideoFACT

## MUSIC ENTER SANDOR

STEVEN SANDOR  
steven@vueweekly.com

We all know that a music video is one of the best ways to promote an up-and-coming band. And VideoFACT, the grant organization funded by MuchMusic, MuchMoreMusic and MusiquePlus, has helped fund more than 4 000 Canadian music videos since it was founded more than 20 years ago.

The next deadline for grant applications to VideoFACT is Jan 4, 2007. The fund has been upped, so videos that are chosen for funding will receive up to \$25 000, good for up to half of a video's production cost.

Each time the deadline rolls around, the VideoFACT panel receives hundreds of submissions, so I chatted with executive director Beverley McKee about the dos and don'ts of approaching the organization for funding.

"One of the things we look at is which of the acts would benefit most from having a video," she says. "Having distribution and some kind of product to support isn't necessary, but it does help, because we see that you have something you want to promote. A video is not an ego stroke; it's an important marketing tool. Before applying, ask yourself, 'do we really need to make a video at this time?'"

**TO APPLY, YOUR MUSIC** must meet all CanCon standards and masters have to be owned by a Canadian or Canadian-owned company (for most indie bands, this is a no-brainer). VideoFACT accepts

applications six times a year, so there's no rush to get it in for January.

"It really is a matter of timing," says McKee. "What we look at is the strength of the track and the strength of the visuals. It is better to send us something that is produced and finished in the studio than a rough demo because, well, a demo sounds rough. There is no rush. We have many application periods."

When sending photos of a band choose crisp, clean images of the performers, rather than artsy shots of a band standing in a junkyard or in a pile of leaves. This happens all the time, and it's a media no-no.

When choosing what songs to send in, you'll notice not a lot of videos get made for songs that have long instrumental intros or dragging solos. Think radio edit. Think about your catchiest chorus. That's not to say you can't make that kind of music, it's just not easy to fit into a short video.

McKee emphasizes the importance of researching other videos out there. On the MuchMusic site, there's a link to VideoFACT where you can view videos funded in the past. Look up the directors and make contact with ones you like. See what can be done on a budget. Many times, production people will work at cut rates or provide service in kind for videos, simply because they are fun to do—and they want to support a band. You will need that kind of help to make a video, because, in the end, a \$25 000 grant isn't a ton of money. ▼

*Steven Sandor is a former editor-in-chief of Vue Weekly, now an editor and author living in Toronto.*

## HAIKU QUICK SPINS

WHITEY AND TB PLAYER  
quickspins@vueweekly.com

**THE WALKMEN**  
"PUSSY CATS" STARRING ...  
RECORD COLLECTION  
Best drunken party  
Mixed with tracks that sound like the  
World's worst hangover

**THE MOONEY SUZUKI**  
HAVE MERCY  
V2  
Faux AM bullshit  
Meets faux rock 'n' soul bullshit  
You want mercy? Hit stop!

**YOUNG GALAXY**  
SWING YOUR HEARTACHE EP  
ARTS & CRAFTS  
A good primer disc  
Shimmering indie pop gold  
A full-length soon please

**DANNY ELFMAN**  
CHARLOTTE'S WEB  
MUSIC FROM THE MOTION PICTURE  
SONY  
Like watching the film!  
But with no pictures, context  
Or dialogue. Rad!

**UNCLE OUTRAGE**  
DANCE EXTREME  
KOMBIE  
Like a drunk uncle  
Who's unpredictable but  
So entertaining!

**V/A**  
PURE(LY) ACOUSTIC  
EMI  
Stripped down versions of  
Songs that don't need stripping down  
How is this better?

**DASIS**  
STOP THE CLOCKS  
COLUMBIA  
Band-picked favourites  
Worth it just to hear him say  
"Shee-aye-ee-aye-eeen"

**EVERCLEAR**  
WELCOME TO THE DRAMA CLUB  
ELEVEN SEVEN  
Same old Everclear  
But I'm sick of hearing him  
Whi-ee-aye-ee-ine

**ABERNETHY**  
COLLEGE GROVE  
SPINNING GOLD  
Melodramatic,  
Melancholy and mellow  
Somehow, it all works



# Vue's tips for keeping the holidays merry (and gay!)

## QUEER TOTALLY GAY

LUKE FOSTER

totallygay@vuwweekly.com

I love getting Christmas presents for people, but it's not the shopping part that excites me; it's the conception of an idea so perfect, so strange, so different and so unexpected that none of the people on my list know quite how to thank me enough. Needless to say, my gift giving is usually hit or miss, but here are some ideas that just might inspire you to think, well, differently when you're deciding which colour of Gap sweater matches your sister's complexion best.

For every gay man who has ever been rejected by *Canadian Idol* because they didn't have either "the look" or "it" or because even a spaced-out cougar mama like Sass Jordan couldn't stand to hear them open their flaming traps, help them to realize their (as yet) unfulfilled dream of becoming a popstar by purchasing them a gift certificate for a professional recording session at a local studio. They can record a couple of their favourite tunes onto a CD so that they can play it for their moms, party guests and solicit potential labels. If the recipient also happens to be your lover, then perhaps you might consider jumping in the booth with him to record a touching duet (decide beforehand who gets to be Elton and Kiki, Sonny and Cher, or Huey and Gwyneth, respectively). And if it really is love, then you'll leave the studio with a Christmas gift that will stand as proof for years to come that at one time, you and whatshisface were in love—glorious, off-key, embarrassingly gay love.

Make your recipient a date at the spa. A facial, massage, or anything that involves heated stones, rose petals, oil and wearing a towel around the head. No matter what time of the year it is, you can never be too clean, smell too good, or have your eyebrows too nicely shaped.

Fashion things out of other things. For example, one year I made a quilt for my favourite cousin out of some padding, a couple metres of discounted tweed fabric and her childhood New Kids on the Block bed sheets. So if you're at all handy with your hands, then this year, think outside the box. Perhaps pick up an old, clean fur coat from a thrift store and fashion a sexy rug out of the old pelt. It will take some time as a project of this nature will have to be done mostly by hand, but you will be left with a lusciously soft, well-constructed fur rug that will be ideal for making sweet, naughty holiday love upon in front of a roaring fireplace. Get crafty!

**WHILE ON THE SUBJECT** of thrift stores, check them out for cheap but trendy and inventive gifts. Clothes are out of the question, but you'll find a great selection of vinyl, weird lamps and other furniture that, with the help of *Trading Spaces*, can be attractive pressies. But the best potential gifts will be found in the housewares section. Vintage patterned serving platters, large gilded bowls or blown glass have more character than anything you'll find new. Old coloured glass can be turned into nifty candle-

holders when given with some votives.

Try pairing something old with something new. For example, buy an old metal drink tray from the '60s and pair it with a brand new cocktail shaker set. Whatever you buy, though, ensure with washing or minor refurbishment that it looks brand new. It might have been cheap to give, but it shouldn't appear cheap once received.

On the topic of those dreadful "home-made" gift certificates, my friend came up with this suggestion. Instead of making them for back rubs or emptying the dishwasher, she says that for every episode of *Queer as Folk* (or *The L-Word*), you should make a coupon, each one stating that the giver promises to theatrically and erotically re-enact the events of that specific episode as each coupon is redeemed.

Most people think lesbians are the only ones who appreciate large, battery-powered tools. Not true. It's a weird people-think-I-shouldn't-be-able-to-do-this-so-I'm-going-to-show-them thing,

You'll leave the studio with a Christmas gift that will stand as proof for years to come that at one time, you and whatshisface were in love

but gay guys are just as capable and enjoy using powertools as your average belly-scratching straightie or dyke. So when you're in Home Depot this season and you come across a power sander on special, it just might be the perfect gift for your gay guy or gal.

This wouldn't be a proper gift guide if I didn't mention that everyone should be reading something Sedaris this season, whether it's David's anthology of hilarious essays, *Holidays on Ice*, or Amy's fantastic hospitality/cook/craft book, *I Like You*.

Now this gift is for someone you either don't really want to spend more than \$5 on, or for someone who you know would swallow the whole sentiment of receiving a homemade "with love" present. It's my mom's recipe for her super-addictive Lemon Sugar Cookies.

With a mixer, beat 1 cup of margarine (or butter) with 1 cup of granulated sugar until fluffy. Beat in 1 egg. Then mix in 1 can of Eagle Brand condensed milk, 4 tbsp lemon juice and 2 tsp vanilla. In a separate bowl stir together 4 1/2 cups flour, 4 tsp of baking powder and 1 tsp salt. Stir dry ingredients into wet mixture gradually until dough forms. Split dough into 2 balls, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour. Once chilled, roll dough out onto flat floured surface to about 1/4" thickness. Cut Christmas shapes out of dough with cookie cutters, place on greased sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 8 - 10 minutes. Once cooled, eat—or if you're going to be all fancy about it, ice with whatever you please. ♥

LISTINGS FOR YOU

## EVENTS WEEKLY

**FAX YOUR FREE LISTINGS TO 426-2889 OR E-MAIL GLENYS AT LISTINGS@VUWEEKLY.COM DEADLINE IS FRIDAY AT 3 PM**

### CLUBS/LECTURES

**CANADIAN NATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE** 101 St (479-1999) • Basketball; every Mon (5-7pm) • Healing Circle; every Mon (6-8pm) • Boxing; every Mon/Thu (7-9pm), every Tue (5-7pm) • Volleyball; every Tue (6-8pm) • Sewing Circle; every Tue (6-8pm) • Beadwork Class; every Wed (6-8pm) • C.N.F.C. Pow-wow; every Wed (6-9pm) • Hip-Hop Class; every Thu (5-7pm) • Cree Class; every Thu (6-8pm) • Elders and Residency; every Fri (all day) • Safe Using and Harm Reduction; Last Fri each month (11am-12pm) • Tobacco Reduction; every Fri (1-2pm) • Drop-in Night; every Fri (6-8pm)

**CONVERSATION CAFÉ** Unity of Edmonton Church, 13212-106 Ave • Meeting presented by Rev. Yvonne Racine • Every Tue (1-3pm)

**EDMONTON NATURE CLUB** Royal Alberta Museum • Monthly meeting featuring Gerald Romanchuk speaking on birding areas and presenting photos of the birds of Christmas • Fri, Dec. 15 (7:30pm)

**EDMONTON SINGLES DINNER AND DANCE CLUB** www.esdwc.com (465-9979) • Dinner, wine, and dancing • Dec. 15

**HYPNOTHERAPY INFORMATION SESSIONS** StillPoint Centre, 200, 11209-Jasper Ave (452-9388) • An informal meeting with hypnotherapist Terri Cooper. Find out how hypnosis and hypnotherapy can benefit you • Dec. 16, 23, and 30 (11am-1pm) • Free

**IMAGES ALTERNATIVE CAMERA CLUB** 10101 School, 6415-106 St (469-9776) www.imagesab.ca • Meets every 2nd and 4th Thu (8pm) each month featuring presentations, speakers, workshops, outings, monthly and year-end competitions. Photographers of all levels are welcome • \$40 (individual membership)/\$50 (family)/\$20 (full-time student); visitors may attend three times before joining

**REDAIATION • Eastern Sammarti Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society** 11403-101 St, www.gadensamtenling.org (479-0014) by Kushok Lobsang Dhamchoe, beginner Tue (7pm); intermediate Wed (7pm); advanced Sun (11am-1pm) • **Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization**, 208-10132-105 St, (425-1050) www.bkwsu.org; Raja Yoga Meditation

**PARENT TALK** (481-1292) Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton offers support groups and workshops for parents at various city locations

**SELF ESTEEM SUPPORT GROUP** (496-5930) • For women who are experiencing chaos as a result of a life crisis and who feel isolated • Group meets each week

**TOASTMASTERS CLUBS • 'N'orators:** Beverly United Church meeting room, 11919-40 St (476-6963) Improve speaking skills, leadership skills, time management, organizational, listening and social skills; every Wed (7-9pm) • **Pursuers:** Best Western Cedar Park Inn, 5116 Gateway Boulevard (457-0808) www.pursuers.org, weekly meetings to improve your communication and leadership skills in a supportive environment every Wed (7-9pm) • **Chamber Toastmasters Club:** (780) 459-5206, Visit us and learn how to deliver effective presentations, conduct business meetings, and develop as a communicator and a leader; every Thu (6pm)

**VOCAL IMPROVISATION GROUP** (479-9999) estheranna.st@gmx.ch • Group using voice as an instrument in impro-exercises and in free vocal improvisation just starting • The first Sat each month (1-4pm)

**WASHTAUBIAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION** 7777-100 Ave (424-8339) • Free guided hike/ski, approx. 10 km at Gold Bar Park • Dec. 17 (meet at 10am at Gold Bar parking lot)

**WINTER LABYRINTH WALK** (479-9999) 100 Ave (424-8339) • Begin your new year with a few moments of quiet reflection with Jean Ure and Nancy Brine, open to all ages, and is done in silence. Children are welcome • Jan. 6 (11am-2pm) • Free, donation appreciated

**WOMEN IN BLACK** In front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil every 1st and 3rd Sat ea month, stand in silence for a world without violence (10-11am)

### QUEER LISTINGS

**AGAPE** Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender differences in education and culture focus group • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

**BISexual WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP** http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bw Edmonton • Social group for bi-curious and bisexual women • 2nd Thu ea month (7-8pm)

**BOOTS AND SADDLES** 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows Members only

**BUDDYS NITE CLUB** 11725B Jasper Ave (488-7736) • Open nightly 9pm-3am, Fri 8pm-3pm • Sun: Rotating drag shows with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair in The Stardust Lounge and GoDiva and Donnatella NE1 in The GoDonna Show, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Mon Amateur strip contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Tue: Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Hump day with DJ Sexxy Sean • Thu: Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Fri: We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm • Sat: Undie night for men only, free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser

**DOWN UNDER MENS BATH HOUSE** 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Open 24/7 • www.gayedmonton.com

**EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION** www.edmontonrba.org • Monthly after business mixer: Network and share contacts in the GLBT business community • Second Wed ea month

**HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY** 300, 11456 Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hivedmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

**ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB** Roost, 10345-104 St (387-3343) • Crossdressers, transsexuals, friends and supporters meet the 2nd Thu each month (8pm), http://groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton\_illusions/

**INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus** • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu ea month (fall/winter terms); Speakers Series. Contact Kris (kwell@ualberta.ca)

**LIVING POSITIVE** 404, 10408-124 St, www.edmliving-positive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Every Tue (7-9pm); Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

**MADELINE SAMARTI FOUNDATION** 81 Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV-AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

**MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB** www.geocities.com/makingwaves\_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

**PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON** 9540-111 Ave (488-3234) • Open: Mon-Thu 1pm-10pm, Fri 3-10pm • Bears Movie Night: Bears Club, last Sun ea month (1-5pm, TV room) • Trans Education/Support Group: Support and education for transsexual, transgendered, intersexed, two-spirited and questioning individuals; 1st, 3rd, last Sun ea month (2-4pm) with Cody • Sunday Night Men's Discussion Group: Mens social and discussion group, every Sun (7pm); Rob Wells at robwells780@hotmail.com • Friends and Family Playgroup: 2nd Sun ea month (2-4pm) with Noelle, friendsandfamilyplaygroup-owner@yahoo.com • Monday Movie Night: Movie nights with themed movies and discussion afterwards, every Mon • TTIQ Alliance: Support meeting for transgender, transsexual, intersex and questioning 2nd Tue ea month; ttiqualliance@shaw.ca, 718-1412 • GLBT Seniors Drop-In: Every Thu (2-4pm) with Jeff Bovee, 488-3234 • Sick and tired of being sick and tired? Cocaine Anonymous meeting, Thu 7-8pm; CA Hotline 425-2715 • HIV Outreach: Drop-in circle every other Thu (7pm) • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth support and social group, every Sat (7-9pm); yuy@shaw.ca, www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Suit Up and Show Up-Big Book Study; Sat (12-2); suitupshowup@hotmail.com • NDP LGBT Caucus: last Sun ea month with Jay, 488-3234

**PRISM BAR AND GRILL** 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

**THE ROOST** 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Thu-Sun 8pm-3am; Fri Sat 8pm-4am • Thu: Gorgeous featuring hostess Dr. Lexxi Tronic featuring Drag Kings and Queens, burlesque and rotating game shows. Bands upstairs monthly • Fri: All Request Dance Party every Friday with DJ Jazzy • Sat: Always like New Years Eve: with DJ Dan (retro) downstairs and DJ Jazzy (new music) upstairs • Sun: A fabulous Drag show every Sunday featuring hostess Connie Lingua. Rotating guests, live singers and drag Queens, with contests \$2 cover; free pool all night long • Weekends, \$4 (members)/\$6 (non-member)/Sun \$2 cover

**STEAMWORKS** 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

**WOODY'S** 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Tue Karaoke with Tizzy and Patrick • Sat-Sun Pool Tournaments a

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**BRIGHT NIGHTS WINTER FAMILY FESTIVAL** Hawrelak Park, 9330 Groat Rd (426-4620) • Until Sun, Jan. 7 • Donation of cash or non-perishable food items for the Edmonton Food Bank

**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOURS** (420-1757) • Edmonton Transit for a tour through Bright Lights, and the Legislative and Royal Alberta Museum grounds • Dec.

14-21 • Tickets available at Th

**ILLUSIONS-MAGIC 'N' MIRACLES** 11455-87 Ave • Thu Dec 20

**SANTA'S KIDZ-A WINTER WON** • Benefit concert in support of the Foundation and the St. Pr Foundation • Dec 15 (under) at TicketMaster

**SNOW SCULPTURE CREATIONS** Club, 119 Street off Whitemud Freeway (227) • Featuring a group of artists, including Richie Velthuis at work, read and is a preview event at the 2006 Skate Festival • Dec 15-16

**WINTER SOLISTICE CELEBRATION** Unitarian Congregation, 11125-87 Ave • Three different services, the last at 7pm also has childcare available at 9pm and 11pm. All of the services are based and pagan elements • Celebrate the return of the light with home baked goods and drinks • Dec 15-16

### KARAOKE

**BAR-B-BAR** 4249-25 St (479-1111) Sat (9pm) James Mr (479-1111) (7pm) James, Mr Entertainment

**CAMELOT SPORTS BAR** 10231-4 Every Sun (8pm-12) with Jazzy

**CASTLEDOWN'S PUB** 16752-16752 (9pm-1am) with Off-Key Entertainment

**CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB** 3716 (6565) • Every Tue (9pm) with St Productions

**CROWN AND ANCHOR** 277 Cal (7696) • Every Thu

**ECCO PUB** 9605-66 Ave (496-4966) (9pm) with Sonja, ProSound Productions

**FRANCO'S PUB** 14059-14059 (9pm-2am) with Jazzy

**GAS PUMP** 10168-114 St (496-4966) (9-10pm) Gord's Best Live Singing Show

**HAWKEYE'S TOO** 10044-102 St (426-102) (8pm-midnight) with Deb Thelin Her

**KNIGHTS PUB SOUTH** 19 Ave 106 St (496-4966) Every Fri-Sat (10pm-2am) Gord's Best Live Singing Show

**LIONSHED PUB** Coast Terrace Hotel Blvd (431-5815) • Every Sun (8pm-10pm) Entertainment

**HAZADAR** 10725-104 Ave (429-4966) Karaoke (5pm-late) with Ch

**MOJO'S** Best Western Hotel (496-4966) (7888) • Every Fri (9-10pm) with St Productions

**NEWCASTLE PUB** 6108-90 Ave (431-5815) Thu Karaoke

**O'CONNOR'S IRISH PUB** 9013-8013 Every Thu (9pm-1am)

**ON THE BORDER** Karaoke Mondays Entertainment Scott F Thursdays Latin music (9pm)

**PEPPERS** Westside Karaoke (8022) • Every Thu (9-10pm) with Stonerock Productions

**RATT 2** 900 Stuen (492-2153) • Every Wed (9pm) That Tune every Wed (9pm)

**ROSARIOS** 11715 106 Ave (496-4966) Karaoke bar, 7 days a week

**ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL** 101 St (423-3499), every Mon Sat (9-10pm) Ruth • Highstreet, 1031 (9-10pm) • Old Strathcona every Thu-Sat (9-10pm) with

**SANTANNAS** 17930-17930 Every Wed (8pm-12) with

**SILVER MARTINI** 10668-10668 (1am) with ProSound

**SPORTSWORLD ONLINE AND DISCO** 13710-104 St (496-4966) (7pm-midnight), Sat-Sun

**THORSBY HOTEL** • Every Sat ProSound

**X-WRECKS LOUNGE** 10143-10143 (7-10-11:30pm) with Sonja, ProSound

**YESTERDAY'S** 112-205 (0295) • Every Thu (9-10pm-2am) Entertainment

**ZAKS ON 51ST AVENUE** 10253-5047) • Karaoke Nights Every Fri



# ASTROLOGY

2vueweekly.com

**APR 21 - APR 19)**  
You will be honest with you. I do not offer smooth prizes, but offer prizes." Walt Whitman wrote "Song of the Open Road" and now I'm saying it to you. If you attend the events of 2007 to bring smooth prizes, you'll be disappointed. But if you can figure out how to turn your attitude in such a way as to earn for rough new prizes, you are rewarded beyond anything you could have. The first hint of how true this arrives soon.

**APR 20 - MAY 20)**  
Alcohol need play no role in this week's potentials. Your must naturally inhabit what we in business industry call an "altered state" which is very different from being high, and it could turn out much more than being merely healthy. My question? Break taboos that are necessary to observe. Wander uninhabited zones that have previously been forbidden. Explore the frontiers of fun.

**MAY 21 - JUN 20)**  
A little too busy to do anything but genocide in Darfur last week-ported Fark.com a while back, manage, during a snowstorm in to leave fallen tree limbs in the crucifix on a statue of Jesus." mean-spirited interpretation of

the Divine Wow's behaviour, although it's funny in a snarky kind of way. Your assignment in the coming week, on the other hand, is to joke about spiritual matters with a more generous attitude. It's prime time for you to be humorously amazed by the tricky enigmas of creation.

## CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

Imagine you're with a team of explorers in Antarctica. You're climbing the 610-metre granite spire called Rakekniven that thrusts up out of the ice in Queen Maud Land. The temperature is 30 degrees below zero. There's not a plant or animal in sight. The blinding white emptiness of the wasteland beneath you fills you with desolate reverence, alienated awe and soaring gratitude. As far as you are from everything that normally gives you comfort, you've rarely felt stronger or more alive. Got that scene in your mind's eye, Cancerian? Though you won't experience it literally, I bet you'll experience emotions similar to those you'd have if you did.

## LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

Your face alternately contorts with strain and breaks into beatific grins. Your body language careens from garbled jargon to melodic poetry. Your clothes make a fool of you one day and show off your inner beauty the next. Are you becoming bi-polar? Probably not. The more likely explanation is that you're being convulsed by growing pains that are killing off bad old habits as fast as they're creating interesting new ones. This is one of those times when you should be proud to wear a badge that says "hurts so good."

## VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

Here's the bad news. Sometimes your perfectionism verges on being a sophisticated death trip—a manic compulsion to trap life inside a tight little cell where no change is allowed. Here's the good news: you now have the power to strip away the pathological part of your perfectionism and liberate the healthy core of it. Please swear to me that you'll figure out how to be more fluid and playful with your zeal for excellence. Spend less time running your mind in vicious circles and more time running your mind in upward spirals.

## LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

There are three kinds of darkness: pathology and evil; the mysterious unknown; the shadowy, unripe parts of our psyches that are on their way to becoming more interesting and useful but are still awkward and inarticulate. I believe that you can help prevent outbreaks of the first kind of darkness by developing a closer personal relationship with the second and third types. This would be a good time for you to do just that, Libra.

## SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

Scorpio actor Leonardo DiCaprio is not a big fan of locking lips. "When you think about it, kissing is pretty disgusting," he told Britain's *Eva* magazine. "The human mouth is one of the dirtiest things on this planet. There's so much bacteria, slime, and trapped food." I hope that you will not only ignore DiCaprio's opinion in the coming months, but that you will launch a campaign to increase your commitment to kissing and all related pursuits. In my opinion, the potentials

inherent in 2007 should inspire you to raise your mastery of the oral arts to a very high level. And it starts now.

## SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

"The thing that makes you exceptional is inevitably that which must also make you lonely," said playwright Lorraine Hansberry. I agree. That's why my exuberant advice for you this week is also cautionary. According to my reading of the omens, in 2007 you will have unprecedented opportunities to cultivate and express the special talents that make you so unique. To get to the root of them, though, you'll have to be willing to get less of the approval and appreciation you'd ideally like to have. You may not have to be relentlessly solitary, but you will have to be vigorously independent.

## CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

Harper's Index says the US government spends more than twice as much on military defence than do Russia, China, North Korea and Iran combined. The aggregate population of those four countries, on the other hand, is five times larger than America's 300 million people. One might reasonably conclude, therefore, that while the US has a right to safeguard itself, its glut of weaponry is absurdly extreme. I'm not definitively asserting that you, too, are over-invested in defending and protecting your interests, Capricorn, but the astrological omens suggest it's a possibility. Please look into it. In any case, consider freeing up some of your contracted, fearful energy and directing it toward more pleasurable and constructive goals.

## AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

Some Christians believe Jesus will come back to fix this corrupt world. Certain Jewish sects propose that the messiah will soon appear on Earth for the first time. Among Muslims, many predict the legendary 12th Imam will return and bring salvation to humanity. In India, devotees of Vishnu expect the avatar Kalki to arrive on the scene and carry out a miraculous redemption. Even the Buddhists prophesy Maitreya, the chosen one who'll establish universal peace. Personally, I suspect that the whole point of our spectacularly confounding moment in history is that each of us must become our own savior. The coming year will be an excellent time, Aquarius, for you to master the art of doing just that: being your own savior. And it all starts now.

## PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

In Cracker's hit song "Where Have Those Days Gone," singer David Lowery recounts a road trip he made through his old haunts in California. "In Mendocino County, I thought I saw Thomas Pynchon at the end of the bar," he croons. "No, that's just Rob Breznsky writing his astrology column." While in the past I've been confused with David Duchovny, Peter Coyote and Ry Cooder, this marks the first time I've been mistaken for the great novelist Pynchon. Thanks, David. Now it's time for you Pisceans to find out what celebrity you resemble. The omens say it's perfect moment for you to identify with a hero, role model or famous mover and shaker. To do so might help free your self-image from the unheroic confines it has gotten stuck in. ♠

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## SERVICES

**SACE - Public Education Program:** Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (www.sace.ab.ca) provides crisis intervention, information, counseling & public education services. The following is a list of topics we cover in our presentations. If required we can customize a presentation to meet your needs. T: (780) 423-4102 / F: 421-8734 / E: info@sace.ab.ca; www.sace.ab.ca / 24 Hour Crisis Line: 423-4121

Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton offers support groups and workshops for parents. Various city locations. Call 481-1292 for information.



## ARTIST TO ARTIST

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## ARTIST TO ARTIST

Female lead needed for short film. 20-30 yrs old to play drug dealer Jesus. Paid gig. Make-up, hair on set. e-m: josh@joshloewen.com

Century Dinner Theatre is now holding auditions for its 2007 season. Please email audition@shaw.ca to make an appointment.

**Edmonton Fashion Week** seeks aspiring fashion designers and stylists for Cheap and Chic Contest for Mar. 22-28. Media Exposure and Promotional opportunities. Please e-mail planetze@shaw.ca or call 428-3499. Studio located at 10055-80 Ave. Open Wed - Sat 12am-5pm.

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## ARTIST TO ARTIST

**Seeking dancers** to perform for possible New Years Eve bash. Please drop by the studio if interested or call Planet Ze Design Center, 428-3499

**Wanted: A Director/Filmmaker with a need for a project and a passion for Ninja's and Comedies.** [RaVeN@SeducingInternalNeeds.com](mailto:RaVeN@SeducingInternalNeeds.com)

**ANIMATED FILM CONTEST FOR YOUNG CANADIANS- MAKE THE PIXELS DANCE:** from now 'til Jan. 15, 2007 on the NFB's Focus on Animation Web site. Youth from 9-20 are invited to grab a cell phone or digital camera and make a film up to three minutes long, with the ordinary-or not so ordinary-materials around them. [nfb.ca/animation](http://nfb.ca/animation).

**Call for poets to participate in S Country Fair 2007,** the Lotos Land spoken word stage. Email Blaine or Dee at [mostvocal@canada.com](mailto:mostvocal@canada.com), give a sample of work (2-3 poems), a bio.

**Artsy Mum, a collective of emerging artists with children, wants your share** inspiration and childcare! [artsymum@gmail.com](mailto:artsymum@gmail.com)

**Seeking dancers** to perform for possible New Years Eve bash. Drop by the studio or call-Planet Ze Design: 428-3499

**Planet Ze Design: looking for performing artists, models, dancers, and actors** in regards to Edmonton Fashion Week. Call 428-3499 for more info. Drop-ins welcome. 10055-80 Ave.

Call to Enter: **ArtHub Studio Gallery** features guest artists. Incl: Proposal; 10 slides/photos; CV; Artist statement. For info Ph Tim 423-2966.

**Open Auditions:** every Thursday evening, 8pm-12am at THE IVORY CLUB 2940 Calgary Trail, Edmonton's only Dueling Piano Bar. For info Ph Tim @ 904-7455.

**ARTISTS/PHOTOGRAPHERS:** darkroom to share, excellent equipment. Nominal fee for chemicals/photo paper. Bernadette @ 868-7353 or email: [belaberge@shaw.ca](mailto:belaberge@shaw.ca)

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**Solid metal act seeking exp. bass player with pipes** for serious project. Must be willing to experiment sonically. Pro gear/attitude. Casey@221-0419.

**Drummer needed for 4-piece original rock band Cassidy.** Weekly jams/regular gigs. Visit [www.cassidyrock.com](http://www.cassidyrock.com) or call Sean 424-0875.

**Assist, Leduc area, seeks other musicians.** Rock, folk, blues, country, no jazz. Good gear, can gig, call 387-3343.

**R&B band looking for trumpet player.** [www.chain-offools.ca](http://www.chain-offools.ca); Danny at (780) 909-5160.

**Vocal improvisation Group**—just starting! The 1st Sat ea month; 1-4pm, using our voice as an instrument in impro-exercises, in free vocal improvisation. Estheranna (780) 432 2226 or e-mail: [estheranna.st@gmx.ch](mailto:estheranna.st@gmx.ch)

**Local a cappella group seeking singers.** Looking for one male and one female, or two females. Contact [info@svenblvd.com](mailto:info@svenblvd.com) if you're interested.

Exp. mature **bass player w/vocals seeks** like-minded musicians for **weekly jam sessions** (classic rock covers). Occas. no bar gigs. No drugs. Mike 474-3740.

Multi-instrumentalist from Leduc **looking for other musicians** to create music together. 980-4009.

**Wanted top 40/classic rock and blues bands.** Promo pack and CD to JJ's Pub, 11827 St. Albert Trail.

## LOST AND FOUND

**FOUND: PINK IPOD** on bus Nov. 7, Tues. [ppb@telusplanet.net](mailto:ppb@telusplanet.net) to ID.

## VOLUNTEER

**Christmas Morning Smiles Campaign** • Meals on Wheels are accepting unwrapped new gifts suitable for seniors. Drop off at Meals on Wheels, 11111-103 Ave, Dec. 1-15 • Delivery of gifts: Dec. 18-Christmas Day. Ph 429-2020 for info.

Support the **Youth Emergency Shelter Society** Call 468-7070 to donate today—and help YESS fulfill their mission of giving youth at risk a chance!

Team leaders needed to volunteer for the **Christmas Bureau**. Schedule and oversee other volunteers at donation desks and special events. Ph Lana at 414-7682 or [www.christmasbureau.ca](http://www.christmasbureau.ca).

**Volunteer for New Year's Eve Downtown.** Indoor and outdoor security, craft area supervisors and attendants and snowball throwing challenge attendants and more. Commitment of only 5 hours. Call Scott at 423-2822 ext. 31. [www.eventsedmonton.ca](http://www.eventsedmonton.ca) for more info.

**Want to make a difference in someone's life?** Teach an adult to read and write. We are always looking for tutors in your area. Contact the **Centre for Family Literacy** 421-7323 or find us online at [www.familit.ca](http://www.familit.ca)

**Mentors for Children/Youth.** Supportive adult role models needed to share time and interests with kids in care. Evening or weekend placements, 2-3 hrs/wk. Various locations. Lily @ 432-1137, ext. 357.

**Old Strathcona Youth Society:** Looking for volunteers aged 21+ interested in working with high-risk youth, drop-in setting. Ph Naomi 496-5947, e-m: [osyc@telus.net](mailto:osyc@telus.net)

We believe that all children have a right to grow in families and schools, and that all adults deserve to have real jobs, homes and friends. Ph 454-0701 and help to open the gates to community living in your area.

**HipHopsYouth Group:** looking for creative, leaders who want to learn more about liver health. Computer designers, health promoters, public speakers are welcome, we will provide mentoring. Ph Melissa 444-1547.

Fall hours of **Edmonton Bicycle Commuters, BikeWorks.** Edmonton's volunteer run bike shop are Wed 5-9pm and Sat 12 (noon)-5pm. Hours are subject to change, please call ahead to confirm: 433-2453.

**Sponsor a guide dog pup for Christmas.** [www.albertaguidedog.com](http://www.albertaguidedog.com).

**Help to broadcast news for blind** and print-restricted Edmontonians! Email [edmonton@voice-printcanada.com](mailto:edmonton@voice-printcanada.com), or call 451-8331.

**Do you want to have fun driving grandmas and grandpas?** We pay your gas! If you can spare 2 hours per week/ Monday-Fridays during the day and have your own vehicle, we would love to hear from you. Call Deanna at Seniors Driving Centre at 732-1221.

**Volunteer Yoga Instructor: Strathcona Place Senior Centre.** Ph Rita Mittelbach 433-5887.

**Volunteers Needed!** to teach conversational English to adult immigrants at a public library. Various locations, avail. 1-2 days/wk. No Experience required. Call Judy 424-3545.

**Volunteers Needed!** to be an interpreter for Spanish speaking newcomers to Canada. Call Judy 424-3545.

**Volunteers Needed!** for simple clerical and non-solicitation phone calls. Downtown, flexible schedule 2-8 hours/week. Call Judy 424-3545.

**Literacy Tutors Needed.** Assist adults with developmental disabilities to acquire basic reading and writing skills. Support provided. 1-2hrs/wk. Various locations. Lily @ 432-1137, ext. 357.

**Volunteer for a more just society for immigrants and refugees.** [www.multiculturalcoalition.ca](http://www.multiculturalcoalition.ca) or call Janina 423-1973.

First formational meeting of the Canadian Church of Pagan Humanism. **Foundresses, nuns, and Directors needed.** For info and time, call Trey at (780) 477-2540 or [cageytic@telus.net](mailto:cageytic@telus.net).

**Volunteer in Strathcona Place Senior Citizen Centre Dining Room,** Ph Terrie Shaw, 433-5808.

**SEEKING musicians, literary and visual artists** for the U of A Hospital's **Artist on the Walls** volunteer program. Must have formal experience/training and be able to commit 2-3 hrs/wk for 6 consecutive months. For information or to book an interview, please call 407-8428.

**WECAN FOOD BASKET SOCIETY** seeks volunteers in the Westview Village neighbourhood. Ph (780) 413-4525 [www.wecanfood.com](http://www.wecanfood.com)

**Volunteer for Canadian Mental Health** contact CMHSA-ER at 414-6300 or check [www.cmha-edmonton.ab.ca](http://www.cmha-edmonton.ab.ca).

**Brain Neurobiology Research Program** at U of A seeks individuals suffering from **severe PMS** for research study. Ph 407-3775.

**Brain Neurobiology Research Program** at U of A seeks individuals suffering from **PANIC ATTACKS** for research study. Ph 407-3221. Reimbursement provided.

**Brain Neurobiology Research Program** at U of A seeks individuals suffering from **SOCIAL PHOBIA** for research study. Call 407-3221. Reimbursement provided.

**Brain Neurobiology Research Program** at U of A seeks individuals who have recently delivered and are suffering from **POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION** for research study. Call 407-3906. Reimbursement provided.

**Volunteer to Strathcona Place Senior Citizen Centre Outreach Program.** Ph Jo Royal 433-5808.

**The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers is seeking immigrants who are visual artists.** [www.emcn.ab.ca](http://www.emcn.ab.ca). Full details: Jacqueline Zaro, 424-7709 / E: [jzaro@emcn.ab.ca](mailto:jzaro@emcn.ab.ca)

**ESL Tutors urgently needed!** Call P.A.L.S. at 424-5514 to help someone learn English as a Second Language. Training and materials are provided.

**Kiwanis Club** is seeking volunteers to become part of the global Kiwanis. For info contact Colin Reichle at 460-9639 or Marg Day at 476-5033.

**Become a friend to a NEW Canadian.** Dulari at 474-8445 or [www.eisa-edmonton.org](http://www.eisa-edmonton.org)

Volunteers needed to **teach English as a Second Language** to newcomers during the summer. Morning or afternoons at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Call Marty at 423-9516.

**Become a distress line volunteer.** Training classes begin in Nov. Ph The Support Network, 732-6648. [www.thesupportnetwork.com](http://www.thesupportnetwork.com)

Volunteer for the **Canadian Birkbeiner Society** Need: Festival Director; Chief of Timing (Finish Line); Chief of Long Starts; Chief of Clothing. For the event: Sat, Feb. 10. E-mail: [info@canadianbirkie.com](mailto:info@canadianbirkie.com) / [www.canadianbirkie.com](http://www.canadianbirkie.com) / Ph: 430-7153.

**YEAR ROUND ON-LINE AUCTION for Alberta Easter Seals.** Donate items, bid, have a great time. Carmen 429-0137 x233. <http://auction.edmonton24hourrelay.com>.

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**FEMALES NEEDED!!!** Make \$799 US per month with a spy cam in your bedroom. Voyeur website is currently looking for young attractive girls. Call Jamie for more info. 1-800-474-8401

**ESL Tutors urgently needed.** Call P.A.L.S. Help someone learn English as a second language. Training materials provided.

**Red Cross is seeking energetic, committed community members to become Prevention Educators** for its **Respect and Abuse Prevention** program. Training this fall. Contact Deanna Key (780) 423-1111 or [na.key@redcross.ca](mailto:na.key@redcross.ca). [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

**The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton** volunteers to take calls on our 24-hour Crisis line. For information and upcoming training dates visit [www.sac-edmonton.ca](http://www.sac-edmonton.ca)

**CPAWS Edmonton Boreal Education** Presenters needed. Contact CPAWS Ed. [education@cpaws-edmonton.org](mailto:education@cpaws-edmonton.org) for info.

**Volunteer Drivers needed** for the Seniors Driving Centre, 2-3 hrs Mon-Fri. Ph Anna 424-3545

**Society of Seniors Caring About Seniors** drivers needed to assist frail seniors with errands; \$8/ride. Ph Val 465-0711

**Wecan Food Basket Seeks Volunteers** Opportunity for people on limited income to provide quality nutritious food at affordable prices needed in the Bonnie Doon area to help seniors. For orders, Ph 413-4525

If you would like to reconnect with your cooperation agency, or are looking to connect with other returned volunteers visit [www.wecanfood.com](http://www.wecanfood.com)

**Food Not Bombs** Looking for people to help with cooking and serving of meals every Sunday 8751 or e-m: [foodnotbombs@edmontonbombs.com](mailto:foodnotbombs@edmontonbombs.com)

**Overwhelmed? In a tough spot? Talk to a professional.** Fee Walk-In counselling 482-INFO (4536) or call The Support Network, [www.thesupportnetwork.com](http://www.thesupportnetwork.com)

**Living Positive,** looking for volunteers to help with programs and fundraising activities. Ph 424-3545; m: [info@edmlivingpositive.ca](mailto:info@edmlivingpositive.ca)

**The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton** of volunteers to take calls on our 24-hour Crisis line. Hours are self-determined, you can work from home. Ph 423-1102

**A call for volunteers - Action for Healthy Communities:** Questions about AHC programs? 944-4687 Visit: [www.ahc.ca](http://www.ahc.ca)

Volunteer for the **New Neighbours** Ph Edmonton Immigrant Services Association friend to a NEW Canadian. Ph Dulari 474-8445

If you OR your brother/sister has schizophrenia 6033 to be in research study. Exper

**Networks Activity Centre** provides a safe, fun environment for adults with brain injury to volunteer Ph (780)479-1757, e-m: [Kapetanakis.nacentre@telusplanet.net](mailto:Kapetanakis.nacentre@telusplanet.net)

**Adult Day Support Program** provides special needs with a recreational/educational program Donna 434-4747.

Volunteer Overseas with Canadian Council International: human rights, community development, and HIV/AIDS education. [www.cci.org.ca](http://www.cci.org.ca)

Do you like to drive your own car in Edmonton? To be appreciated, call Seniors Volunteer Centre for more information at 732-1221

Adult volunteers needed during day to help seniors at non-profit agency with cards/emails/games. Ph Yvonne 424-3545

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- the chances of winning depend on the number of entries received
- by entering, entrants consent to the use of their names by Vue Weekly for publicity
- Vue Weekly is not responsible for prizes unclaimed after 15 days



all makes condoms seem so, I dunno, quaint

## NT.SEX.COLUMN

ANDREA HENDERSON  
@ahsexcolumn.com

a fertility monitor for birth control partner pees on a stick, inserts it in the monitor, and it tells her she's fertile. This device is supposed to tell you when you are likely to be pregnant—we are using it to see if we are on the fertile days. This would be more accurate than the old method. Do you think this might be a better (and less invasive) method of birth control?

course it is. I wouldn't go so far as to say they wouldn't sell such a thing if it wasn't valid ("they" sell all kinds of stuff), but there's good science to

support fertility awareness, both as a contraceptive method and a conception aid. In truth, you don't really even need the monitor, since a woman's body will tell her what it's up to if she knows how to listen.

If you (the generic you, not the specific, biologically male you) want to do fertility awareness without a monitor, you will need a cheap digital thermometer and some paper or a spreadsheet program. There's a very slight, like a couple tenths of a degree slight, rise in temperature after a woman ovulates, best recorded first thing in the morning before you do anything else, like sit up or breathe. Any given temperature reading is meaningless in itself but over a few months a pattern tends to emerge. Some very nutty data-queens get a kick out of making charts with multiple coloured pencils.

Perhaps the most meaningful, and certainly the ickiest, of the fertility awareness signs is the state of one's cervical

mucus. Toni Weschler, the queen of fertility awareness, tells the story of how she was unable to get herself booked on any of the wholesome morning talk shows—nobody wants to hear about mucus, particularly right after breakfast—and was completely flummoxed until she tried telling the producers that she'd be talking about cervical fluid instead. Anyway, cervical fluid runs free and clear like a mountain stream (except ickier) when a woman is fertile, and dries up and becomes inhospitable if not downright rude to sperm when she is not.

There are other signs and wonders to marvel at and to record obsessively with coloured pencils. The internet is full of detailed instructions, as is the aforementioned Ms Weschler's widely read book, *Taking Control Of Your Fertility*. I myself am a fan of obsessive charting combined with ovulation predictor kits, which are basically just the sticks without the little computer to read them out for you. The

only real difference is that the monitor, when it determines that you are fertile, produces a wee hen's-egg-shaped icon, which always bothered me a little. If I'm finding nursing a bit disturbingly bovine, I found that picture just a little too ... chickeny. Now that I actually have kids, there are enough things around here that cluck and moo, thanks.

LOVE, ANDREA

DEAR ANDREA

Because we have a long distance relationship, sometimes when I see my girlfriend she's on her rag and so we can't have sex. She suggested buying some medicine to control her rag or at least delay it. I don't know anything about pills but can they cause people to be unable to get pregnant? I know that she's getting the pills because sex is important to both of us, but I'm worried about her health. Is there a pill that you could suggest?

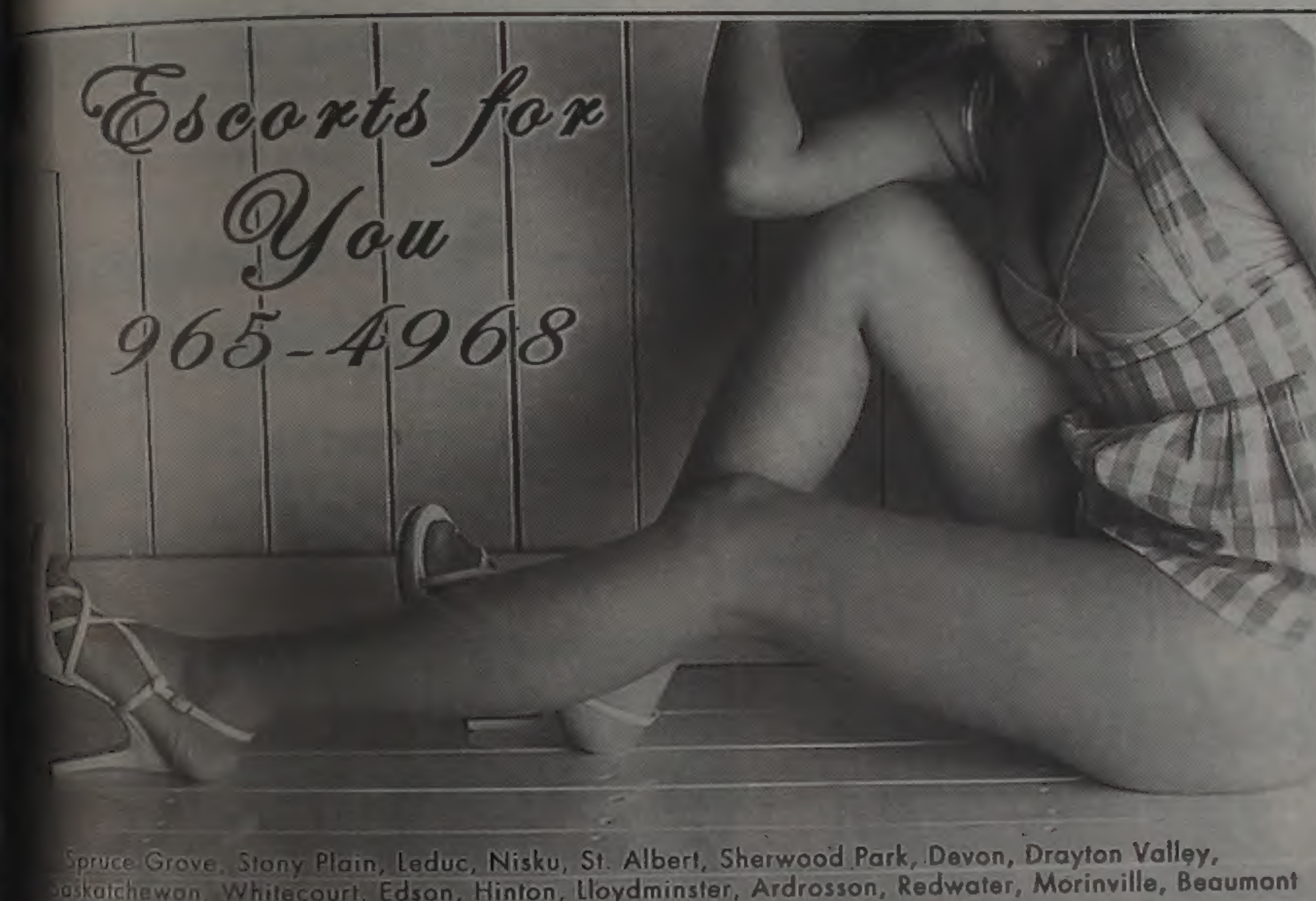
LOVE, TO PILL OR NOT TO PILL

DEAR PILL

You know that "on her rag" is not the proper technical term, right? I worry that you might approach a pharmacist or doctor with questions about rag control and I'm sorry, I just don't see that going well.

The "medicine" you're looking for is just plain old birth control pills, so while it certainly can cause people to be unable to become pregnant, that should not be a problem later (I hope much, much later) when your girlfriend is ready to have a baby. Regular pills will work if taken all month long, as will the fancy new ones sold specifically to limit a woman's period to four times a year (sold as Seasonale). Any of these will require a doctor's prescription, and I couldn't be happier about that. You guys sound a little unclear on a number of concepts, which is fine as long as you're not messing around with anything that could seriously screw you up if mishandled, like, oh, somebody's endocrine system.

LOVE, ANDREA



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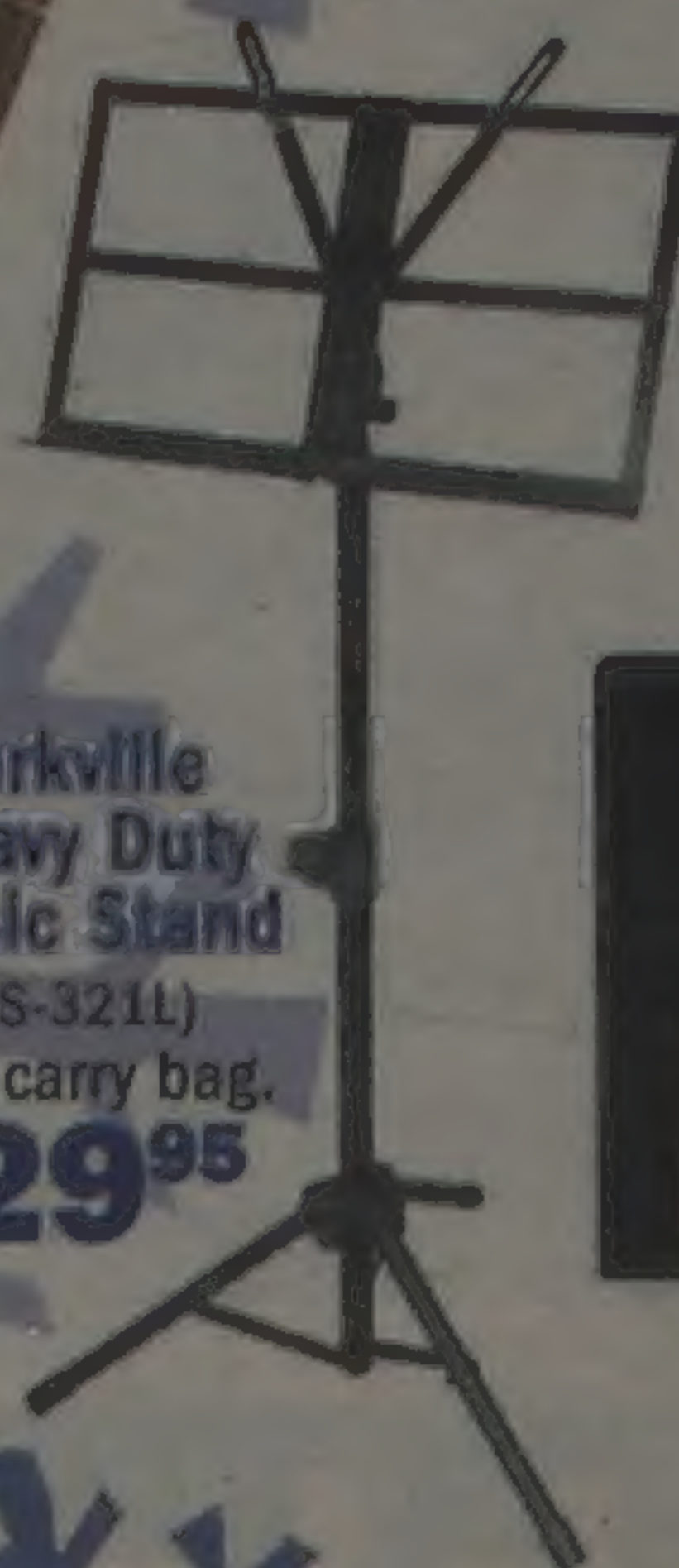


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